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The Mennonite Quarterly Review

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VOLUME XX
1946

Published by
The Mennonite Historical Society
Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana

BERKELEY BAPTIST DIVINITY SCHOOL
SANDFORD FLEMING LIBRARY

v. 20
1946

Press of
THE MENNONITE PUBLISHING HOUSE
Scottdale, Pennsylvania

The Mennonite Quarterly Review

VOLUME XX JANUARY, 1946 NUMBER ONE

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Editorial

Recent years have witnessed a great increase of interest in the Old order Amish and a growing appreciation for their character and achievements. This is true even more among American scholars and publicists in general than among Mennonites themselves. Part of this interest is due, no doubt, to the peculiarities of the Amish, that is, those aspects of their manner of life and customs which are radically different from modern American ways. But increasingly it is due to the realization that this group has been outstandingly successful in building up and maintaining strong rural communities. Attention of sociologists and social historians is therefore being focussed on a description and analysis of the Amish way of life in its various aspects, social, economic, and religious, in an attempt to discover the secret of their success.

One of the most recent studies of the Amish is a Master's thesis by Jane C. Getz, done at the American University under Professor Ernst Correll of the editorial staff of the Review, entitled *Religious Forces in the Economic and Social Life of the Old Order Amish in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.* The heart of the thesis is the section dealing with economic organization and practices, where for the first time (aside from Kollmorgen's work) a thorough, scientific analysis of the "economic secret" of the Amish is made available. The Review is fortunate to be able to present this completely objective, but thoroughly sympathetic and competent, study. It will appear in two instalments.

The process of clarifying and deepening Mennonite thought on the problems of war, peace, state, gospel, love, nonresistance, and related matters is going forward in a most encouraging way. Until recently the Mennonite position, where maintained, has been largely traditional, and where not traditional it was either greatly confused or being largely abandoned. The confusion was often due to the naive assumption that all opposition to war is equally valid and that modern pacifism is not only a welcome partner for Mennonite nonresistance but probably a more intelligent and effective form of peace thinking and working. Some Mennonites even entered this pacifist movement with full loyalty and enthusiasm. One of these was Don E. Smucker, who became a traveling secretary for the *Fellowship of Reconciliation.*

The work of such capable scholars as Guy F. Hershberger and the late Edward Yoder has done much to clear away the confusion of Mennonite nonresistance with modern pacifism and to give Mennonites an intelligent modern grounding and content for their traditional convictions. Recently Don Smucker has joined this goodly company, having weighed modern pacifism in the balances and found it completely wanting. Out of his own "conversion" experience, and with a thorough first-hand knowledge of the pacifist movement from the inside, comes the "Mennonite Critique of the Pacifist Movement," which is published in this issue. In his thinking Don Smucker is following the only road which can be effective in the leadership of modern Mennonite thought, namely, historic Mennonitism combined with a consistent Biblicism and a thorough knowledge of contemporary philosophy and theology, plus rigorous logic and warm personal commitment. The Review looks forward to additional articles from his pen similar to this one and the previously published "Theological Triumph of the Early Anabaptist Mennonites."

John Umble's exhaustive study of extinct Ohio Mennonite Churches comes to its final conclusion in this issue. The last congregation to be treated is also one of the most interesting. In contrast to all the others, it consists of an immigrant group coming direct from Germany. It is also unique in the character of its leader, John Risser, and in the survival of a large amount of documentary material relating to its history in the form of Risser's personal correspondence. Again, as in previous instalments, the story of this group presents not only valuable genealogical and local historical data, but also much material for reflection in respect to the factors making for life or death in Mennonite communities.

The Mennonite Quarterly Review

Vol. XX No. 1

EXTINCT OHIO MENNONITE CHURCHES

V Ashland County, III

John Umble

The Salem Mennonite Church

When the writer began his research in Ashland County to locate the former site of the Mennonite Church and cemetery, he had only a few notes from the *Herald of Truth* and the John Risser correspondence in *The Mennonite Quarterly Review*[1] to indicate that such a congregation had existed. He presumed that the church had been situated in the northeastern part of the county near the Chester Township Mennonite congregation in Wayne County. When he examined the court house records for a deed to church property, he was surprised to learn that two Mennonite meetinghouses only a mile apart had been built in Vermillion Township about the middle of the last century, one in Section Seven, (first called the Beutler Meetinghouse, later Pleasant Ridge), and one in Section Five (the brick church), five miles south of the city of Ashland.

Driving to the site of the older of these, another surprise awaited him: in the middle of the southern boundary of Section Five and the middle of the northern boundary of Section Eight he found two cemeteries, one on the northwest corner and one on the southeast corner of the intersection of an east and west township road and a north and south highway now known as State

[1] See Harold S. Bender, "Mennonites in America in 1841," in *The Mennonite Quarterly Review*, VI (January, 1932), 52 and VI (April, 1932), 118-19.

Route 511.[2] Inscriptions on the grave markers in both cemeteries indicated that both burial grounds had been used by Mennonites, Rissers being buried in each, but few of the names were those usually found in (Old) Mennonite congregations. Puzzled, the writer drove to the other cemetery described in an earlier article as the Pleasant Ridge Cemetery, now known locally as the Vesper cemetery. The older portion of the burial ground seemed Old Mennonite, but here too were a few names found in the cemeteries in Sections Five and Eight. Calling at the farm house near the cemetery, the writer learned practically nothing of historical value, but was directed to the home of Wes. Reed, now deceased. This genial, friendly scion of sturdy Mennonite ancestors was able to give the key to some of the riddles. But several visits to the Ashland County courthouse and the city library were necessary to piece together the early history of the settlement.

Of invaluable assistance, also, is a bound volume of eight letters which John C. Wenger borrowed while in Germany. These letters have been typewritten from the originals written to friends in Germany by John Risser and his wife Maria (Weber) Risser and by John Risser's brother Jacob.[3] The letters describe in much detail the ocean voyage to America of the Rissers and the Beutlers, and present a graphic account of pioneer conditions in Ashland County including early church conditions. The Mennonite Historical Library of Goshen College has some original copies (nearly thirty) of similar letters in the meticulously perfect German script of Reverend John Risser.[4] Some of the facts about the Ashland County Mennonite congregations printed in former articles were gleaned from these letters.

John Risser and his German co-immigrants were the founders of the Salem Mennonite Church in Section Five of Vermillion Township.[5] During the century and a half following the founding of the first Mennonite settlements in Pennsylvania while American Mennonites were gradually losing certain aspects of their German culture and becoming absorbed in economic advancement yet clinging tenaciously to the earlier forms of church life, their German cousins had weathered the storms of persecution and had more and more adopted the mores of their Lutheran and Reformed neighbors. They were educated, respected citizens, owned considerable property, and shared in community life and interests. In the

2. See Appendix A
3 See Appendix B
4 See Appendix C
5 See Appendix D

process of secularization they had lost some of the spirit and the conviction of their Swiss Brethren ancestors. Hence when John Risser settled in Ashland County in 1832, he favored an educated, salaried ministry, no longer practiced some of the ordinances, saw no harm in serving on a jury or in holding political office, and had become accustomed to seeing young Mennonites accept military service when it became too great an economic hardship for the family to pay the required fine. He had a mild contempt for the uneducated Mennonite ministers in Ashland County and for their manner of extemporaneous preaching. Among the Lancaster County Mennonites who composed the majority of the local congregation were a number of men so unlettered that they could not write their names and few of the women could write. Some could not read.

These probably were not the only reasons why John Risser could not participate in the church life of the Mennonite congregation in Ashland County. At first both he and Preacher Peter Beutler worshiped with the Ashland congregation mentioned in an earlier article as the Paradise Hill or Mifflin Township group.[6] But when Bishop Jacob Nold came from Columbiana to hold the communion service in the spring of 1833, it became evident that Risser could not work with the local group. They seem to have offered some concessions, but under conditions which Risser felt he could not conscientiously accept. Within a year after his immigration he and a few other recent German Mennonite immigrants who kept arriving in the settlement decided on a separate congregational organization. Peter Beutler, however, and a number of others had little difficulty in working with the Mennonites in Mifflin and Milton Townships and Beutler's brother, John, as mentioned in an earlier article,[7] built a Mennonite meetinghouse on his farm.

Rev. John and Catherine (Weber) Risser and their eight children,[8] with Philippina, a maid of all work, and John Roth and his wife, set out from the Bavarian Palatinate and traveled by coach through Kassel, Marburg, and Göttingen arriving in Bremen on July 14, 1832. One trying feature of this trip was the necessity of exchanging money every few days because each little German state had its own currency. Sometimes too the travelers could not

[6] See *The Mennonite Quarterly Review,* XIX (July, 1945), 216 and 228

[7] See *The Mennonite Quarterly Review,* XIX (July, 1945), 229-30

[8] John, Jacob (d. 1846), Abraham (d. 1846), Peter, Daniel, Maria (d. 1866), Lottie (Charlotte), and Elizabeth. David, the youngest, was born in America.

understand the German dialect of the country through which they were passing. On July 18, they left Bremen on the ship Elizabeth and after a most uncomfortable voyage of forty-eight days cast anchor in New York harbor on September 6, only to find that cholera was raging in that city. But by September 11 they had sent their wagon and their chests to Philadelphia by boat. Risser and his family took the steam boat to New Brunswick (fourteen hours), coach to Trenton (ten hours), steamboat to Philadelphia (sixteen hours).[9] From Philadelphia they took the coach to Lancaster (twenty-two hours) where they arrived at the home of a relative, Martin Möllinger, on September 15. A letter which they had written before leaving Germany had not yet arrived! But Preacher Peter Beutler who had passed through Lancaster County a few weeks earlier had informed Risser's friends that he was enroute to America.[10]

At Martin Möllingers they also met Jacob Möllinger, the brother of the mother of Mrs. John Risser. Risser had intended to leave his family here while he investigated investment possibilities in Ohio and Missouri but Martin Möllinger advised him to proceed to his new location in the fall on account of the bad contion of the roads in the spring. So after visiting at Möllingers for twenty-three days and visiting two Risser relatives, (Peter Risser, the miller; and a Preacher Risser, the son of a certain Jacob Risser) they hired a teamster to haul their chests to Pittsburgh. He agreed to let them fasten their own wagon behind his and to permit them to ride in it so as to save traveling expense. Two of the boys slept in the wagon at night. On the way to Pittsburgh they saw scores of covered wagons, part of the westward movement of population. Most of these wagons were drawn by six horses. Some of them were the property of teamsters who made a business of transporting goods from eastern Pennsylvania to Pittsburgh to be shipped to points on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers.

What had induced Risser to set out for Ashland County was a conversation with Abraham Rohrer, later a bishop in Medina County, Ohio, who had just returned to Lancaster County from a one hundred mile investigation tour in Ohio on horseback. Rohrer recommended Wayne or Ashland County as the best location he

[9] Risser paid 550 florins ($220.00) for transportation for himself and family and his goods from New York to Ashland. He thought that he might have saved 350 florins if he had gone by way of the Erie Canal and Buffalo.

[10] For Peter Beutler, see *The Mennonite Quarterly Review*, XIX (July, 1945), 216, 228 *et seq.*

had found. Then, too, Risser had learned that Peter Beutler who had preceded him by several months had purchased a farm in Ashland County. Another consideration was the predominance of Germans in Ashland County.

Risser reached the home of Valentine Ring twelve miles from Pittsburgh on October 27[11] and after enjoying eight days of Indian summer weather they continued their journey to Ashland County, following the coach road through Canton and Wooster as far as Mifflin, about ten miles east of Mansfield, and then turned north to the home of Benjamin Brubacher, who, as mentioned in an earlier article,[12] moved here from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, with his sons and sons-in-law about ten years earlier. When Risser and his family had left Pittsburgh, Peter Weber's eldest son had hitched three horses to Risser's wagon and drove to Ashland County. Because he was able to speak English, John Weber also accompanied them to help them on their way and he remained with them in Ashland for more than a week while Risser would be buying a farm or renting a house. Two days after Johannes Weber's return home, his eldest son, eighteen years old, took sick with cholera and died a few days later. At that time Cincinnati had a severe epidemic of cholera, and New Orleans, both of cholera and yellow fever.

When John Risser arrived in Ashland County in 1832, the settlers in the area south and west of the city of Ashland, at that time known as Uniontown, were chiefly Germans or at least German-speaking. Most of the Mennonites in the vicinity of Five Points were American citizens, but they used the German language exclusively in their church services and chiefly also in their social and family life. The non-Mennonites in Vermillion, Orange, Mifflin and Milton Townships with very few exceptions also were of German descent. Many were German immigrants. When the Lancaster County Mennonites had arrived in 1822 or 1823, the earliest pioneers had already lived in the community for eight

11 Risser names several people in this settlement, some of whom are known to have been Mennonites. The first settlers were Strohm and a certain Hodel from Erpolzheim who had married sisters. Hodel had been a redemptioner who worked three years to repay his passage to America. Following the first two came Peter Weber (Peter Weaver), Johannes Weber (John Weaver), and then the Neff families. Valentine Ring, Weis (Wyse), and Christophel had come later. Some of them were farming on shares, giving half the crops. Weis and Christophel gave the third. But Hodel already owned 500 acres and had built a house and barn for each of his sons. The Christophel mentioned here is Jacob Christophel. He was born in the Palatinate about 1783, came to America in 1818 and settled in Alleghany County, Pennsylvania. He was ordained to the ministry about 1828, moved to Columbiana County, Ohio, and in 1848 to Elkhart County where he served as a minister until his death in December, 1868, at the age of eighty-five.

12 See *The Mennonite Quarterly Review,* XIX (January, 1945), 46.

or ten years. In 1817 John Kraft purchased land in what is now the heart of the city of Ashland. Jacob Reed in 1821 acquired title to a farm one-half mile west of Hayesville. Philip Pressler moved to Ashland County from Pennsylvania the next year. Joseph Strickland, who, however, was not a German, purchased in 1826 the west half of the northeast quarter of Section Eight in Vermillion Township. On this farm, later purchased by one of the Rissers, is located the Strickland cemetery where Rev. John Risser and the Rev. Carl Justus van der Smissen are buried. Rev. Risser wrote in 1833 that practically all the settlers west of him were Germans but that east of him there were many English.

When Rev. John Risser and his family arrived in Ashland County on November 14, 1832, the aged Benjamin Brubaker and his wife vacated one of the two rooms of their log cabin near Five Points to be occupied by the Risser family—John and his wife, Catherine, their eight children and Philippina—while Risser was locating and renting an empty cabin. Ten days later the Risser family moved into an empty house (hut)[13] about three miles from Peter Beutler who for $250.00 had purchased forty acres with five acres cleared and a fairly good house. Beutler was surrounded by German neighbors and Risser wished to purchase land in that vicinity primarily for the sake of being near Beutler but also to be located in a German neighborhood so that he could organize a German school to be taught by his friend, Roth.

Risser spent several months looking for a suitable location. Meanwhile all of his boys except John attended an English school.[14] Risser writes to his friends in Germany that John, also, should be in school but was kept at home to do the chores and run

[13] Risser gives the following description of the better houses on this frontier. The houses (huts or cabins) were built of hewn or unhewn logs daubed with clay to fill the cracks. The logs laid across the top of the first floor supported a half-story attic. The chimney was built at the gable end of the hut and the inside plastered with mud. There being no hearth, the fire in the fireplace both for cooking and for heating, was built on the floor. In the hut rented by Risser neither the first floor nor the attic was divided into rooms, the room on the first floor serving as sitting room, bedroom, kitchen, pantry and cellar. In this room they set up three of their beds and stored three of the chests. One bed and one chest were in the attic. Beside Risser's hut there was also a log stable 18x22 feet where they kept their cow and other live stock. Here the family lived for about three months.

[14] Judging from Risser's description of the location of his rented cabin, one would surmise that they attended school in the building later described by Jacob Bechtel. About 1828 Jacob, the son of Peter and Sophia (Kinch) Bechtel, attended school in a rude hut, not very spacious, but contructed of massive logs. For a roof the settlers laid large logs across the top and covered them with soil. The floor was formed of rough unplaned puncheons, the seats of slabs. The fireplace occupied the full length of one end of the room. The windows were made by removing a log from the side of the building and using greased paper for window lights. The desks faced the sides of the hut and were merely smoothed puncheons laid on pegs inserted in holes in the logs that formed the sides of the hut.

errands. Otherwise Risser would have had no time for writing. He began one letter on January 6, 1833, and did not finish it until several months later.[15] This letter when copied by Karl Weber in 1928 filled one hundred twenty-seven large typewritten pages.

Near the close of this letter Risser announces that he has purchased an eighty acre farm situated about one and one-half miles from Preacher Peter Beutler. This was the east half of the northwest quarter of Section Eight in Vermillion Township. It lies west of the present Strickland-Risser cemetery which is in the northeast quarter of the same section. It lies south of the quarter section on which the future Mennonite Salemskirche (Salem Church) was built, the quarter section purchased in 1834 by Preacher John Risser's brother, Jacob.[16]

John Risser's farm, a half mile long north and south and a quarter of a mile wide, resembled many other land purchases of the early German Mennonite immigrants: a gentle slope, for drainage; an eastern slope, to catch the warm rays of the early morning sun; a spring-fed brook, to supply running water; some lower land, for meadow and pasture; some higher, for early spring tillage and planting. The farm forms part of a long north and south ridge overlooking a broad fertile valley stretching away eastward to another similar ridge. Risser spent months selecting his farm and he could scarcely have made a better selection. It is surprising that he could choose so well in a section still covered with dense forest. He had insisted on land partly cleared and under cultivation and with moderate improvements. He had soon discovered that wherever he bought he would need to erect new buildings within a short time.

On the eighty-acre farm which Risser purchased for $700.00, twenty acres had been sown to wheat. There were fifty apple trees almost ready to bear and a peach orchard already bearing. The west side on the upper part of the slope was suitable for small

15 This letter describes the sea voyage in great detail with much advice to those who contemplated making a similar trip; the arrival in New York, the visit with relatives in Lancaster County, the journey overland to Ashland County, the first impressions of the land and people, the search for a temporary residence, the economic and cultural conditions of the frontier with such items as the market price of produce and the sale price of land, the considerations which induced him to buy a certain farm, health conditions in the United States especially with reference to cholera and other epidemics. Risser added considerable propaganda calculated to induce numbers of his relatives to seek a new home in the land of freedom and opportunity.

16 The amount of money Risser brought to America is not clear. In a letter written in 1859 he stated that, when he left Friedelsheim in 1832, he owned twenty "Morgen" of land and was heavily in debt.

crops and twenty acres on the east side, too fertile for wheat, he intended to keep for meadow and later plant to corn.

Risser's farm lay a mile and a half east of Beutler's forty but he hoped to have Roth buy land near him and also to have Beutler sell his farm in a year or two in order to move on an adjacent eighty.[17] He hoped also to have some of his European friends and relatives come to America soon and purchase land near his. Practically all his neighbors living between him and Beutler were Germans. Some of them were interested in the German school which he hoped to establish.

In most respects, therefore, Risser was well satisfied and looked into the future with confidence and hope. His first severe disappointment, as already mentioned, came at Pentecost (1833) when Bishop Jacob Nold of Columbiana County, came to conduct communion services in Ashland County. Even before this Risser had been considering holding separate services at the eastern end of the settlement; that is, near where he and Preacher Peter Beutler lived, partly because it was too far to the other services (six or seven miles) and partly on account of the type of sermon which Kauffman and Nusbaum preached. Risser wrote in 1834: . . . "Weil ihre Vorträge weiter gar nichts darbieten, als ein durch die Uebung gelerntes Lamitieren, so dass man jedes Mal immer wieder dasselbe hören muss, kaum, dass die Lamentation in etwas andern Worten geschieht" (their sermons offer absolutely nothing further than a lamentation learned by practice so that each time one must hear the same thing again and again without even having the lamentation presented in slightly different words.)

Until the Pentecost referred to he had attended their services from time to time, probably at the Brubacher meetinghouse near Five Points, had been asked to preach and had felt that his sermons were appreciated both by the ministers and by the congregation. At that time they conducted services every two weeks as was the custom in most Mennonite congregations until near the close of the nineteenth century except when a congregation had erected two meetinghouses, one at either end of the settlement.

But when Bishop Jacob Nold came to conduct the customary semi-annual "counsel meeting" and communion service, the doctrinal differences between Risser and the America Mennonites stood out in sharp contrast. Risser in reporting his difficulty with the local congregation mentioned a number of these differences. "They teach and believe," he reports (freely translated), "(1) that one may

[17] This was the eighty west of Risser, purchased in 1840 by Joseph Krehbiel.

not under any circumstances cite anyone to appear before the court, and just as little accept a civil office; (2) that one may not under any circumstances resort to a weapon to defend his life and property not even in case of an attack at night; (3) that the minister must not receive any pay whatsoever; (4) that under no conditions could a member marry outside the Mennonite church; (5) then too they do not approve of preparing a sermon prior to the service." He goes on to say that they practice the ordinance of washing the saints' feet, a practice which is repugnant to his wife. He himself, however, has no particular objection to it although he sees in it an entirely different signification than they do. They would have been willing to permit him to do as he pleased, however, in regard to practicing this ordinance.

Bishop Nold and the other ministers laid the above points or articles before him omitting (3) and (5). Risser states that he would have had no conscientious scruples against observing any but the first. But even this he had intended to accept with certain reservations. He had decided to accept their conditions and to participate in the communion service thinking that he was "not responsible for their error." But when he was informed that his partaking of the communion would be accepted as a promise that he would believe and teach as they did, he withdrew.

Peter Beutler, on the other hand, entered into full fellowship with the local congregation, even going so far as to notify Risser that he could have no part in helping to build the new school house which Risser and Roth were planning to erect during 1834. Both ministers remained friendly neighbors throughout the controversy, and Beutler offered to send his children to Risser's German school as soon as the building was completed. But it was a genuine surprise and a bitter disappointment to Risser to lose Beutler from their worship service, "in this wretched, pitiable fashion," as he put it.

How little Risser understood the local Mennonites is evidenced by his further efforts to secure their co-operation. He proposed that they should exchange pulpits, the American Mennonite ministers to preach in his services and he and Roth in the services near Five Points at the Brubaker meetinghouse. (At this time the Pleasant Ridge meetinghouse had not yet been erected on John Beutler's farm.) He was certain that, if the local Mennonite ministers would agree to this arrangement, eventually their members would attend his services in considerable numbers. Risser realized that if the ministers would enter into no agreement to co-operate with him, the members of their congregation would not attend his services.

In the latter case he hoped to be able to interest his German neighbors (Lutheran and Reformed) to whom he refers as "Evangelische" or "Protestanten" (Evangelicals or Protestants), in attending his services. He and Roth planned to invite these people, specifically, Böttcher, Schwan, Fuchs (Fox), and Scherf (now known locally as Sheriff),[18] to their services and gradually introduce into the sermons various articles of Mennonite faith and doctrine. The communion service was to be open only to Mennonites and Risser resolved not to baptize infants, but in all other respects they would treat the "Evangelicals" as coreligionists until such a time as the latter would be ready to adopt the Mennonite congregational practices and Mennonite doctrine. "Then whoever accepts our teaching and our requirements as biblical truth and lives according to it, shall be recognized as one of us regardless whether he was previously of Paul or of Apollos or of Peter or of Christ," he writes. But in this plan, also, he was not successful as future events proved.

Risser tried once more to reach an understanding with the local Mennonites. He wrote out his views at great length and tried to have his case reviewed by the congregation. At one time he felt that some plan of co-operation would succeed. He was certain that the local ministers and the congregation would accept him, but when the time for counsel meeting and communion arrived he was no nearer reconciliation than before. Eventually he was joined by his brother and some of his wife's relatives from the Palatinate, turned his attention entirely to building up an independent Mennonite congregation and hoped with the help of the "Evangelicals" to erect a building to serve as school building and meeting house.

Jacob Risser, brother of Rev. John Risser, emigrated from Germany in 1834 and purchased the quarter section north of Risser's 1833 purchase. It seems to have been entirely wooded but Risser at once gave a contract for the clearing of fifty acres at six dollars an acre.[19] Jacob Risser and his wife, Maria, and family

[18] David Schwan, Conrad Fox, Frederick Böttcher, and Valentine Scherf lived from a half mile to a mile south and southwest of John Risser's 1833 purchase in Section Five. Hill states that Conrad arrived in Ashland County in 1833. He seems to have brought with him his sons David, born in 1819, and Frederick, born October 28, 1822.

[19] "Cleared" land on the heavily forested frontiers had the undergrowth and brush grubbed out and burned, the trees with a diameter of twelve inches or less cut down and burned, and the trees over one foot in diameter girdled with an ax to deaden them. These deadened trees, left standing in the fields until the settlers would have time to remove them, gave an odd, bleak appearance to a field of growing crops. If left standing so long that decayed limbs fell to the ground, they were a menace to live stock and to fences and might also cause considerable crop loss. Risser writes

occupied a small cabin on the John Risser farm while their own land was being cleared. This same small cabin had been occupied for a time by the carpenter Böttcher and his family. It also served for a time as a meeting house for Sunday services every two weeks.

At a Sunday service in Risser's little cabin early in July, 1834, after it became apparent that Risser could not work with the local Mennonite congregation, he and his friends decided to erect a log building twenty feet by thirty to serve for day school and for Sunday services, and to begin construction as soon as possible.

Prior to this time, partly because the cabin was so small and partly because Risser was not quite certain what form his organization should take, he conducted a very simple service consisting almost wholly of Scripture reading, prayer and the singing of a few hymns. By this time he had decided on a separate congregation as German Mennonites independent of the local Mennonite group (eine eigene Versammlung als deutsche Mennoniten ohne Verbindung mit den hiesigen Menisten). The school and meeting-house was not built in 1834. Late in the autumn of 1834 the tiny congregation decided to postpone building operations until the following spring. Risser conducted communion services in the little cabin on his farm in the fall of 1834 and twenty people took part in the service. German school began on Christmas day, 1834, in the same little cabin with an enrollment of twenty-odd pupils. Roth was employed to teach the school for fifty dollars a year. During the "winter half-year" he was to conduct classes four days a week and during the "summer half-year" three days a week. He was to have six weeks vacation during the year—two weeks for planting in the spring, two weeks for harvest in the summer and two weeks for harvest in the fall.[20]

The vacation periods were deemed necessary not only because the children were needed at home but because it was expected that Roth would operate his forty-acre farm about a mile northeast of the school. But since Roth disliked farming, the congregation decided on a two-story building, the first floor to serve as a residence for Roth and the second to provide room for school and church. The cost of building, about $150.00, and most of the labor fell on John and Jacob Risser and on Roth. It was necessary also to dig a well and to add a kitchen to the structure. This building project seems to have been undertaken and completed in 1835.

of a certain severe windstorm which caused great damage to growing crops as the result of a large number of huge deadened trees falling into the fields.

[20] Letter written by John Risser, dated February 14, 1835.

Meanwhile according to letters written by Risser in 1834 the little colony was being established. John Risser's house which was ready for roof in the fall of 1833 was completed on June 24, 1834, by the carpenter, Böttcher, and his grown son who each received fifty cents a day. Jacob Risser, brother of John, came with his family during this year (1834). Simon, of Kindenheim, purchased eighty acres for $625.00 six miles east of Risser and attended church regularly every two weeks. Krehbil, Risser's brother-in-law, purchased eighty acres with a saw mill for $1025.00 two miles east of Risser. The farm was half wooded and half "cleared." But the timbers of the barn already were so badly decayed that it was necessary to rebuild.[21] One of the two cabins on the farm needed a new roof. They also excavated a cellar under it, a mason named Marx, doing the mason work. Fox, another German neighbor, a Lutheran, had built a new log house on a twenty-acre piece of timber land purchased for eighty dollars. Roth was laboring industriously on his farm and Risser entertained high hopes for his success. Jacob Schmidt, of Gerolsheim, whose wife Elizabeth seems to have been a daughter of Risser's sister, Anna, married to a Krebill, was employed by Risser for six dollars a month helping to prepare the logs for the latter's new barn, fifty-eight feet long, thirty-eight feet wide and eighteen feet to the eaves.

There is evidence in the descriptions of the building operations that characteristic German thoroughness entered into the work. But there was also attention to beauty. John Risser hauled logs to Krehbil's saw-mill and gave him half the lumber for sawing siding ("weather boarding"). The house was "auswendig weder-gebordet," writes Risser, with boards (probably unplaned) one-half inch thick and eight inches wide. This gives the house a beautiful appearance, he continues, and if one paints them, they last a long time. When Jacob Risser built his dwelling house in 1836, he mortised the hewn logs into corner posts and connected the various lengths in the same way. Above the doorway a beautifully handfinished white oak lintel 4 x 4, bore the names, skillfully carved, "Jacob" and "Maria" "Risser," the date "1836," and a nine-petal rose. Jacob Risser's hewn log house is still in use and apparently as solid as the day when it was completed over one hundred and ten years ago. The logs were covered with sawed and planed siding.

The population was growing. To John Rissers was born a son, David; to Jacob Rissers a son, Peter; to Roth, who had

[21] The condition of these buildings would seem to bear out Risser's statement that the pioneers had reached this section of Ohio eighteen or twenty years earlier than his arrival, hence in 1812 to 1815.

brought his bride to America in 1832, a daughter. References in the letters show that friends of the Rissers contemplated moving to Ashland county from Germany. Jacob Eyman was one of these who came a few years later. His daughter, Elizabeth, was the wife of Rev. John Risser's son, Jacob. John and Henry Plaetscher (Pletcher) both visited the colony but both later purchased land in Crawford county. Another visitor was the son of John Sauer, of Friedelsheim. Christian Risser, the shoemaker, who worked at his trade in Buffalo in 1835 visited Ashland and settled there for several years before moving to Wood county. Jacob Risser, another shoemaker, visited the settlement in 1835 and contemplated moving there. Temporarily he found employment with a brewer and made beer. Jacob Leisy and family came in 1836. Daniel Krehbiel from the Weierhof in the Bavarian Palatinate visited in Ashland County in 1834. Tradition records that Christian Risser assisted his brothers, Henry and Jacob,[22] to come to America. They settled in Ashland County, but Henry lived here only four years, 1845-49, before moving to Wood County.[23]

But John Risser's congregation grew very slowly. He wrote in 1834 that the scarcity of money in the eastern states, brought about by a great change in the banking system, had affected the emigration of Pennsylvania settlers to Ashland county and that the European Germans who were not attracted to Ashland because they had relatives there, ordinarily purchased land from thirty to sixty miles farther west, hence in Crawford or Hancock counties in the Great Black Swamp, where land was cheaper and where a large German settlement was springing up.

But another hindrance to the growth of the colony seems to have been John Risser's lack of tact and his inability to work harmoniously with his neighbors and friends. Preacher Peter Beutler, for instance, as already mentioned, preferred to attach himself to the local Lancaster County Mennonite group instead of following Risser. He also found excuse for failing to co-operate with Risser and his brother in building a school house. Then, too, Jacob Krehbiel, of Clarence County, New York, in his correspondence with his German friends in Europe in 1841,[24] states that Roth did not consider Risser entirely without blame for the refusal of the Ashland County Mennonites to receive him into their fel-

22 See Appendix E.

23 For the later history of the Christian and Henry Risser families see *The Mennonite Quarterly Review,* XVIII (April, 1944), 90-101.

24 See Bender, *loc. cit.,* pp. 119-20.

lowship. His friendship with Roth, too, ended in bitter contention before the little colony was many years old, although in 1834 Risser had written that Roth was worth two Beutlers.[25]

As already mentioned, Roth and Risser organized a German school about a year after their arrival in Ashland county and on Christmas Day, 1834, Roth began teaching for fifty dollars a year. He also preached occasionally when the little group met for the bi-weekly Sunday services. But Roth did not care for farming and apparently was not very successful in operating his forty acres. He had been made rather unhappy too by the failure of some of his fellow passengers to repay the passage money which through some misunderstanding and through Roth's generosity he had advanced for them in order to simplify and expedite the arrangement for their departure from Bremen in 1832. He handed over to the master of the vessel a lump sum instead of figuring each passenger's individual share. He had great difficulty in collecting from some members of the company. One passenger had kept putting him off by saying that his money was in the bottom of his trunk. On arriving in New York he had brazenly refused to pay his fare. Roth declined to turn him over to the authorities and lost this man's share of the passage money.

When his first year's contract expired, Roth felt that he should receive more pay. Risser was well satisfied with Roth's work as a teacher but with his usual parsimony refused Roth's request for one florin, fifteen kroner (about fifty cents) a day. Risser asserted that they could pay no more until more Germans with children should move into the settlement. After considerable haggling during which a fine friendship was destroyed, Roth and his wife left for Buffalo, ostensibly to permit Roth to learn the English language so that he could teach English as well as German pupils in Ashland county, but in reality to live near the colony at Clarence Center where his friend, Jacob Krehbiel, was serving as pastor. After Roth's departure for Buffalo, Risser slurringly expressed a doubt whether Roth's "heavy tongue" would permit him to learn English well enough to teach English pupils. During the summer following Roth's departure, Risser sent his daughter to an English school. He intended to send her also the following summer. By that time he hoped that she would be able to read, understand and speak English as well as she did German. Then they would send her to school no longer.

[25] See Appendix F.

As time went on, the material prosperity of the colony grew. John Risser kept clearing more and more of his land and as his children grew older and preferred to work in Ashland he allowed them to do so and in the customary German fashion applied their wages to the indebtedness on his farm. But Risser found preaching difficult. He wrote his sermons and committed them to memory, but after each sermon he felt that it would be impossible for him to prepare another. Every letter to his friends in Germany expressed the hope that some of them would join his Ashland county colony and bring with them a trained minister (ein gebildeter Prediger).

He made one further effort to affect a reconciliation with the local Mennonite congregation. This arrangement would have relieved him of preaching except every eight weeks! He had heard that the local Mennonite ministers denied having made certain demands of him and that they claimed that he had misunderstood them. But when he tried to work with them the local Mennonite bishop ("Volle Diener," possibly Isaac Kilmer) not only repeated his earlier demands mentioned above, but now added the obligatory observance of feetwashing in addition. Thereupon Risser conducted a final communion service for his tiny congregation, preached a farewell sermon, laid aside his ministry, and for several years seemed happy to be relieved of its burdens. At this time the only families attending services beside his own were the Schmitts and the Herschlers. The distance and the condition of the roads made it impractical for the Herschlers and Rissers who lived in Ashland, to attend his services. Whenever the weather was favorable some of John Risser's neighbors had attended his services, thus making a fair-sized congregation. Christian Risser, the shoemaker, lived in Ashland, as did several others. Christian married Maria Risser about Easter, 1836, and a son was born to them in the spring of 1838. Maria had come from Germany about 1835 and began working for the Rev. John Risser family at Christmas, 1835. (This Christian Risser seems not to have been the Wood County shoemaker, Christian Risser. The latter married a daughter of John Aichelburger (*sic!*), of the Wood County Eichelbergers.)

After Risser discontinued preaching, his group met in the homes for an abbreviated service—a hymn, followed by a prayer and scripture reading by Risser (and possibly an occasional reading of a printed sermon), and a closing hymn. In 1837, he, accompanied by his wife and three of their children and by Mrs. Jacob Risser and two of her children, drove to Cleveland, about seventy miles, with a team and wagon to visit his son John and "Cousin Leisys."

Apparently this was the Mennonite Leisy family who founded the Leisy breweries in Cleveland. Risser had conducted preparatory and communion services at their home in Cleveland at Pentecost in 1835. There they also met "Cousin Jacob Risser," Friederich Hafner, lately arrived from Kürnheim, and a Mr. and Mrs. Schuck (probably Philip), recent immigrants from Puschper.[26] He conducted services for the Cleveland group and observed the communion service with them.[27] That same year the Cleveland Jacob Risser purchased forty acres in Ashland County about seven miles from John Risser. The Schucks accompanied the Rissers home from Cleveland and Mrs. Schuck served them as their maid until Mr. Schuck's father should come from Germany bringing their money and other property. The Roedings and many other families came from Germany but to Risser's keen disappointment failed to purchase land in Ashland County because the price was too high. But Peter Sauer, of Friedelsheim, planned to move to Ashland in the spring of 1843 to live with his brother-in-law, Augustin.

Risser's German background, his inability to work with the local Mennonites, and his broadmindedness led him to appreciate the German Reformed and German Lutheran ministers in the vicinity. At a schoolhouse not far from Risser's settlement, probably near Mifflin, a Lutheran minister held services every four weeks. At that place Risser had preached the funeral sermon for little Margaret Schwan in 1834. And in 1838, following Risser's resignation from his ministry he engaged a young preacher, a native of Germany (probably the German Reformed minister from Wooster), to instruct his three sons, Jacob, Abraham, and Peter, in the catechism. For their own use he made copies of Weidmann's Catechism (thirty-five questions) but in the process of copying it he found it so unsatisfactory that he added nine questions, making forty-four in all.

He intended that his sons should be baptized by the German Reformed minister but advised them not to unite formally with any church so long as they were single. After their marriage they

[26] The present Schuck families in the vicinity of the Stone Lutheran Church are descended from this family. One member of the Schuck family, Christian Schuck, now a member of the Stone Lutheran Church, was formerly a member of the German (or so-called Evangelical) congregation meeting in the Salem Church.

[27] A small General Conference Mennonite congregation survived in Cleveland as late as 1878. In 1874 Carl Heinrich Anton van der Smissen, son of the Rev. Carl Justus van der Smissen, who was one of the pioneer teachers at the Mennonite Academy at Wadsworth, Ohio, came to America, accepted a call from the Ashland County Mennonite congregation, was ordained by his father to the full ministry in October and in 1875 began to preach also for the small congregation at Cleveland. This congregation although small, sent a delegate to every session of the General Conference of Mennonites of North America from 1869 to 1878 including the special session in 1876.

would then be free to unite with whatever church would be most convenient. Because of the scarcity of Mennonite congregations in Ohio he thought it unlikely that they would unite with that denomination. He questioned also whether what he considered the backwardness and the naive simplicity of the Mennonites would permit the founding of a permanent Mennonite society in America. Another matter that affected his confidence in American Mennonitism was its division into nine separate groups each independent and unable to co-operate with the others.

At this time, however, (1838), he still hoped to found a German school and a Mennonite congregation. During the early part of the year he employed a young German school teacher, a Nothnagel, from Zell, to teach their school. "Everyone is well satisfied with him," writes Risser, and then, characteristically, he adds that "Nothnagel gets more done in school than Roth."

The records of Risser's German school are incomplete, but in 1843 John Risser's son, Peter, was the teacher. Even as early as 1834 Risser had written of Peter's aptitude for learning. He attended an academy in the city of Ashland for several short periods.[28] He seems to have given up teaching shortly afterward to engage in business in Ashland.

For a time Rev. John Risser remained very friendly with the German Reformed minister who had instructed his three boys in the catechism, baptized and confirmed them. But as several fine friendships previously had ended in bitter faultfinding and disagreement, this one also ended. Once more the group had no minister. Then John Risser's sister, Anna Krehbiel, and her husband united with the Old Mennonite Church at Pleasant Ridge where their friend, Preacher Peter Beutler, was one of the ministers. Possibly others also united with that congregation including Jacob Risser (not John's brother Jacob, but a cousin) and a Schmitt family. Somewhat later Rev. John Risser twice employed another Reformed

28 Such academies sprang up in many small community centers before the day of the public high school. Most of these private academies were intended to be training schools for the Christian ministry or for teaching. Such a school was opened in Hayesville in 1842 by the Reverend Lewis Granger of Granville, who may have been Peter Risser's father-in-law. (See footnote 43.) The cornerstone of the building was laid on July 4, 1845. On September 3, 1856, a certain William Scott transferred to the "President and Trustees of the Vermillion Institute" an additional plot sixteen rods wide and twenty-two rods long. By this time, apparently, the Presbyterians had acquired title to the property. They managed it until 1875 when it became non-sectarian. William McKinley attended Vermillion Institute. The building, now deserted, is still standing.

Another such school was located at Ashland at a very early date, and still another at Savannah, north of Ashland. Similar schools, well known in Mennonite communities at a later date, were the Smithville Academy in Wayne County, Ohio, and the Glover Collegiate Institute at West Liberty, Ohio.

minister, a Swiss immigrant, to conduct communion services for him and his family. Finally Risser made known to Peter Beutler that he wished to unite with the Old Mennonites and that his wife had agreed to it. Beutler then, without consulting Risser, discussed Risser's reinstatement with his fellow ministers. When Risser learned of it, he accused Beutler of rashness, of proceeding too hastily. One story has it that during the ensuing discussion Beutler lost his temper. On a following Sunday he presented Risser's matter before the congregation and the members, except Anna Krehbiel and her husband, voted unanimously not to accept him as a minister.

This rebuff to a member of their group seems to have united Risser's Mennonite friends. They met at Jacob Risser's home and the entire company including Rev. John Risser's three sons (probably John, Jacob, and Abraham) signed a petition asking Risser to resume his ministerial office. Not receiving a reply for some weeks Jacob Risser went to his brother to learn his decision. Without a word Rev. Risser brought the petition, handed it to his brother, and told him bluntly that he must keep aloof from all church questions and activity if he did not wish to spoil everything. Jacob, deeply hurt, kept this rebuke to himself in order to avoid trouble. Somewhat later, Rev. Risser proposed that the members of the congregation should sign a subscription list each agreeing to pay him a stated annual sum for his trouble in assuming the duties of the pastorate. This they gladly agreed to do and in 1844 he began preaching again.

It is possible that one reason for his earlier refusal to preach and for his emphasis on the difficulty of preparing and delivering sermons was to induce the congregation to give him at least partial support. It is possible also that the resumption of his ministerial duties was occasioned by the report of the early immigration of some friends and relatives from the Bavarian Palatinate. A larger congregation would insure satisfactory ministerial support. In 1845 on the Sunday before Ascension Day he presided at preparatory services (Vorbereitung), on Ascension Day at baptismal services[29] and on Pentecost at communion (Abendmahl). He wrote to his friends in Germany that they should bring with them to America a pitcher and cup (Krug und Becher) for the communion service and for baptism a special vessel (eine besondere Kanne) such as they used in Friedelsheim.

[29] See Appendix G.

In the same year occurred an event that gave Risser much encouragement. In 1843 he had written a short treatise on baptism. This manuscript was printed in Canada in 1845 by Bishop Benjamin Eby who expressed the wish that Risser would deal in a similar manner with other articles of the Mennonite Confession of Faith. It seems characteristic of Risser that he should gloat over this bit of recognition by so well known and highly respected a minister. "So geht es in der Welt!" he writes. A year or so ago he wished to unite with the local Mennonite congregation. The congregation would have been happy to receive him, writes Risser, but Preacher Peter Beutler saw in him a trespasser against their principles and warned them against him. And now Bishop Eby asks him to write on those basic principles![30]

Several new settlers arrived about this time. In 1846 Risser mentioned Cousin Herschler as living in the house of Risser's son Jacob who had died on June 9, 1846. Jacob's widow, Elizabeth, was living with her sister and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Schowalter. Three of Herschler's relatives and a Schowalter of Assenheim were employed in the neighborhood and attended Risser's preaching services. On July 19 Risser baptized a class of thirteen candidates. Three of his children were now married: Peter, John, and Charlotta. The latter married Christian Risser, son of Cousin Risser, formerly from Osthof. John married a young woman, a stranger, who was "more English than German" but who spoke German well and fluently. Peter and John had signed a two-year contract with a merchant in Ashland named Riezner.[31]

[30] The title of this book is *Glaube und Lehre/ von der/ Taufe der Mennoniten/ in/ Deutschland./* The title page adds: "Verfasst von Johannes Risser,/ Mitglied dieser Kirche, und hieher nach Amerika eingewandert, welchen dort/ zwar der Beruf als Prediger geworden ist, aber ohne in eine andere/ Schule als eine gewöhnliche Volkschule gekommen zu sein, sogleich/ kein Gelehrter ist, und daher die Leser den vorkommen-/ den Unvollkommenheiten um freundliche Nachsicht bittet./ Berlin [Kitchener], Canada:/ Gedruckt bei Heinrich Eby./ 1845.

The preface states that the paper was written to be printed in the *Christlichen Apologeten* published in Cincinnati by a Methodist minister, Wilhelm Nast. The latter had printed in his paper (No. 48, 1841) an article not only teaching and defending infant baptism, but insisting that adult baptism had no foundation in Scripture and was incompatible with Christianity. This attack had aroused Risser to a defense of adult baptism and an examination of infant baptism. The little volume of over one hundred pages is remarkable for its lucid reasoning as well as the clearness and completeness of the presentation. The Mennonite Historical Library at Goshen College has several copies of this booklet.

[31] This later developed into the firm Riezner, Risser and Company. Still later the firm was reorganized under the name of John Risser and his partners, Peter Risser and J. P. Riezner. They purchased, for $13,500.00 a woolen factory, a grist-mill, a boarding house, a storehouse and a lot in Ashland. In 1856 or 1857 they suffered a loss of $7,000.00 by fire. This and the unwise extension of credit resulted in the loss of all the property of the Risser brothers and left them heavily in debt besides. Peter was made overseer of rebuilding operations. John went from house to house giving piano lessons.

At this time (1846), in addition to those mentioned above, were the families of Preacher John Risser, his brother Jacob Risser, and their brother-in-law, Christian Herschler, also Krehbiel, John Latschar, Christian Eyman, Christian Risser (the husband of Mary Risser) and possibly others.

Their non-Mennonite German neighbors, some Reformed and some Lutheran, included David Schwan, Karl Fox (Fuchs), Karl Böttcher, Conrad Fuchs, William Zeitler, Michael Vesper, Christian Vesper, John Rething (Roeding?), and Heinrich Speise.

In a letter to his friends at the Weierhof written in early July (1846), Risser stated that the question of building a church had now been so thoroughly discussed—the "for and against," the "thus and otherwise"—that he hoped for an early decision to build. But a few weeks later he announced merely that the congregation had decided that nothing more could be done during 1846. What had actually happened was that both the location and the cost of building had split the congregation into factions. Jacob Risser, the brother of John Risser, and several other members wished to locate the church on the southeast corner of Jacob Risser's land, a location chosen as early as 1835 and where it eventually was placed. But Christian Krehbiel who lived two miles east of this corner favored accepting the offer of Eyman to sell a part of his land one-half mile east of Risser's corner. Another hotly contested question was whether the local members of the Lutheran and Reformed churches (always referred to by Rev. Risser as "the local Protestants") should be permitted to assist in erecting the building and enjoy joint ownership with the Mennonites. When at last in true Mennonite fashion the matter of a location was decided by lot, Eyman's offer was accepted. But this merely added to the general discontent because Eyman did not live at a cross roads. In other respects also the Risser corner was more convenient. Finally, when the Protestants submitted a petition signed by their entire group and their pastor, the decision was reversed after all of the Mennonites had given their word that they had had no part in instigating the petition.

Construction began in the summer of 1847 and the Mennonites and the Protestants signed an article of agreement providing that the Protestants were to pay fifty dollars at once on the cost of the building and two hundred dollars additional within five years. In case they failed to carry out the terms of the agreement they were to lose all right and title to the building, but if they paid the specified sums as agreed they were to enjoy equal rights with the

Mennonites "forever" in the use of the church. The name of the church was to be *Salemskirche* (Salem Church).[32]

On February 24, 1848, Jacob and Maria Risser transferred to the trustees of the "Mennoniten" Church in Vermillion Township for twenty-five dollars one half acre on the southeast corner of their farm, on the west side of the road leading to Ashland and on the north side of the road leading to Mansfield. The land was designed to be occupied by a church known as the Mennoniten Church and also a burying ground.[33] Hill in his *History of Ashland County,* printed in 1880, states that the "German Evangelical, or Mennonite Church of the northwest part of Vermillion township" was erected in 1847, that the late Rev. John Risser was the first pastor and that the church subsequently became the property of the "Germans and Lutherans." The building was of brick construction, twenty-eight by thirty-six feet, and was located on the eastern slope of a long north and south ridge overlooking a broad fertile valley. The dream of Preacher John Risser had at last become a reality.

But the realization of the dream, the building of the church, brought with it misunderstanding and contentions, bickerings and disputings which would have dispersed a much older, more stable congregation.

As already indicated, Rev. John Risser had been involved in difficulty with various friends and relatives from the very beginning. On several occasions he had laid down his ministerial duties and later assumed them again. In one long letter in particular he accused his brother Jacob of a faultfinding, unco-operative spirit. Evidently the German relatives felt that Rev. Risser was not without blame, for Risser wrote a long letter a year later repeating some of the charges, inquiring whether they had not received his former letter, and begging a reply.

On one occasion Jacob wrote his brother, Rev. Risser, a letter (they were near neighbors!) questioning certain statements in one of his sermons. Consequently Rev. Risser had temporarily abdicated his ministerial office and blamed his brother for depriving the congregation of a minister. Earlier Jacob Risser and John Roth had accused Rev. Risser of propounding erroneous doctrine in one of his sermons. A sort of trial had been held with Preacher Peter Beutler of the old Mennonite Church as arbiter but, according to Rev. Risser, the charges against him had not been sustained.

[32] See Appendix H.

[33] This transfer is recorded in the Ashland County Deed Record, Vol. II, pp. 284-5.

During 1846, however, the breaches had seemed to be healed and all difficulties amicably adjusted. Then in 1846 came the decision to build the church, but, as already stated, the location caused so much difficulty that construction had been postponed until 1847.[34] On account of the illness of the brickmason and the unseasonably early arrival of cold weather, construction was interrupted in the fall of 1847.[35] This delay gave opportunity for further dissension. The congregation had been divided on the question of installing a German pulpit (die deutsche Kanzel) or an ordinary preacher's chair (Lehrstuhl), Rev. Risser, characteristically, favoring the more elaborate pulpit. After Rev. Risser's son, John, proposed to raise twenty-five dollars to purchase and install the pulpit the trustees had decided in favor of the pulpit. Jacob Eyman had agreed to their proposal. Jacob Risser was absent when the decision was made.

During the winter, agitation for a reconsideration of the decision to install a pulpit resulted in the appointment of a committee of five. Jacob Eyman, Christian Showalter, John Latscher, and Christian Krehbiel were elected by majority vote. A tie vote for the fifth member was settled by lot resulting in the selection of Jacob Risser, the pastor's brother. In reporting the deliberations of this committee to his relatives in Germany, Rev. John Risser writes that Jacob Eyman and Jacob Risser took up the whole time of the meeting with an attempt to bring reproach and punishment upon him. The committee brought three charges against him; (1) That he had written to the Friedelsheimer Ellenbarger and had discouraged them from immigrating to Ashland County;[36] (2) That he had been the cause of the strife about the pulpit because he had said, "I will have it and nothing else;" and (3) That he had erred in handling the vote on the location of the church.

In commenting on the proceedings, *das Schiedsgericht,* Rev. Risser states that Christian Risser was absent, one hundred miles away, when the decision was handed down, Latschar said everyone had been in the wrong, and Herschler stated that he could find no fault in Risser. Then Latschar resigned as trustee. This seems temporarily to have ended Rev. John Risser's service as pastor.

[34] See Appendix I.

[35] The 1847 building committee was Jacob Eyman, Christian Herschler, and John Latschar. This seems to have been the Jacob Eyman, who in 1834, before coming to America, had made a contribution for erecting a Mennonite meetinghouse and schoolhouse in Vermillion Township.

[36] Risser's defense was that although he had offered to give Ellenbarger only half of the amount subscribed for Risser's support by the congregation, it had been his intention to relinquish all of it after Ellenbarger should become established.

Even after that, Jacob Risser tried to force his brother to deliver to the trustees the money which his mother (now deceased) and other relatives had contributed for the erection of a church and school building in 1834.

In spite of the unhappy events connected with the building of the brick church and the disturbance regarding Rev. John Risser's pastorate, the congregation enjoyed a period of prosperity. They organized a German school and issued a call to Christian Schowalter (born in 1828 at Assenheim in the Bavarian Palatinate) to serve as teacher. He arrived in 1850, taught the school for three years, and then accepted a call to teach in the parochial school of the Zion Mennonite Church at Donnelson, Iowa.[37]

Several families arrived from the Bavarian Palatinate in 1851. With these came Christian Krehbiel (born October 18, 1832, at the Weierhof) who was later to take a prominent part in the work of the General Conference of Mennonites of North America. He worked on a farm in the vicinity of the Salem Church during the first summer.

These and other more recent additions came from Mennonite congregations who had learned to accommodate themselves to a new type of church life in Germany. Many of them were well-to-do. They gave their ministers whole or at least partial support. Their ministers had considerable theological training. They had little in common with the Mennonites who had emigrated from or had been practically driven out of South Germany during the preceding century. The latter brought with them the forms of worship and other elements of the social and religious background of persecuted non-conformists. Their descendants formed the chief body of Mennonites in America during the middle of the nineteenth century. The Ashland County Mennonites with whom Rev. John Risser and his group found it impossible to fellowship were of this group. They were German in speech and customs but without any feeling of attachment for the German fatherland. Their tenacious adherence to the German language rested on a religious rather than a political or nationalistic motivation. The newer immigrants were devoted not only to the language but also to the customs and the culture of the Fatherland. In dress, in general outlook, they bore closer resemblance to their German Lutheran and Reformed neighbors than to the members of the Mennonite congregations at Paradise Hill and Pleasant Ridge.

[37] See Melvin Gingerich, *The Mennonites in Iowa*, p. 81. For a brief biography of Christian Showalter, see H. P. Krehbiel, "Christian Showalter," in *The History of the General Conference of the Mennonites of North America*, pp. 417-21.

This probably accounts for the close association of the Mennonites and the "Evangelicals" in the subsequent history of the Salem Church. As already indicated, the "Protestanten," as Rev. Risser called them at first, were made up of two groups, the Lutherans and the Reformed or "Evangelicals," as they were called in Germany. Because Risser favored the Reformed group from the beginning, he gradually in his correspondence, refers to both parties as "Evangelicals" (Evangelische).

At the time that the church was being erected, these groups, Lutherans and Reformed, being few in number were worshiping together. Their pastor was Rev. Theodor Philip Conradi,[38] one of the signers of the 1847 contract. Soon after Rev. John Risser had resumed the pastorate in 1844, he had invited Conradi to occupy the pulpit for a Sunday or two as guest minister. He accepted and was well liked. Later the Evangelicals gave him a call to the pastorate. He preached every alternate Sunday and Risser only one Sunday a month. This probably suited Risser very well because he always had difficulty in preparing a sermon oftener than every four or eight weeks. He was accustomed to spend much time in sermon preparation, writing each sermon out with great deliberation, carefully committing it to memory and rehearsing it over and over before delivering it.

Then had come the erection of the church with its attendant difficulties. Brotherly love and fellowship had been so disturbed that Rev. Risser kept postponing preparatory services and communion. A certain Eyman, who was leaving for Cleveland to become a saddler's apprentice, also a certain Lehman, and a J. [acob?] Stauffer insisted on receiving communion before they left and appealed to Conradi to administer it to them. After due preparation, he did so. On the following Sunday Rev. Risser violated the contract, signed by the two groups, the Mennonites and the Protestanten, prescribing rules for the joint occupation of the new church. Using the text, I John 2:18 and 19, he severely criticized Conradi. Under the terms of the agreement he could have been locked out of the building when his next turn to conduct services arrived. Instead, however, his congregation merely failed to appear. Only Samuel Krehbiel, John Risser, Herschler, Brant, and Anna Krehbiel and her husband attended the service. When

[38] Eleonora Conradi, possibly a sister of the Reformed minister, Conradi, had married an Engel and is buried in the Risser cemetery. She died May 28, 1853, a. 40-2-15. Daniel, son of J. and E(leonora?) Engle (*sic*!) died March 25, 1830, aged 1 day; also their daughter Anna at a later date. Their son, Henry, died April 10, 1853, aged 25 days.

Risser asked for a letter or vote of confidence, they advised him to seek restoration by confession. This he refused to do, his congregation refused to attend services when he preached, and his pastorate, for the last time, was ended.

Crushed for a period, John Risser allowed his usual elasticity eventually to restore his spirits and he devoted himself to the promotion of a *Unions-kirche,* as he calls it. In a letter written nearly ten years later (1857) he asserted, as he had done on several earlier occasions that the founding of the union congregation had come about in a "sinful manner." But, he continues, God knows how to turn even the mistakes of men for the best. Mennonites, Lutherans, and Reformed seem to have worshiped together with sometimes a Lutheran, usually a Reformed minister. Risser reconciled himself to the new arrangement, at least outwardly, with very little difficulty, although, as already pointed out, he developed a dislike for Conradi. The latter, however, seems to have tried in every way to make all members of the three groups feel a certain bond of fellowship. On one occasion before the "union" concept had gained a firm hold, Anna Krehbiel, the widowed sister of John and Jacob Risser was bedfast for weeks. She hesitated to send for Conradi. But when he came unasked, she felt very much "edified" by his visit. On her mentioning that she had not heard a sermon for a long time, he read for her the entire sermon which he had read to the congregation in the morning service. He also read ("lined" or chanted) the hymns which had been sung in the morning service. Several years later when she was dying she expressed equal love and regard for the members of all three groups. After she had spoken her last words to the members of her family, she pointed to five dollars lying on the table and said, "There lie five dollars; give them to the pastor (Pfarrer)."

In 1851, the year following the dissolution of the Salem Mennonite congregation and the more or less informal organization of the Union congregation, Rev. Risser's youngest son, David, then seventeen years old, received catechetical instruction from the pastor of the congregation and was baptized at Pentecost into the German Reformed Church. At that time four of Jacob Risser's children were members of the Presbyterian Church—Peter, John, Lottie (married to "cousin" Christian Risser), and Elizabeth, Mrs. Eliser Cottun. Elizabeth was married at a quiet wedding in the home of her parents, her mother who died the next year, being seriously ill at the time. Her brother, Daniel, officiated at the

wedding ceremony, his first, for which his new brother-in-law gave him ten dollars. Daniel was a minister in the Episcopalian Church serving for several years in Lancaster, Ohio, and later as principal of an academy. Both Maria and David united officially with the German Reformed Church, and attended the union services at the Salem Church. Peter, John, and Daniel had been baptized by the German Reformed minister from Wooster during the period when their father was inactive in the ministry. Lottie seems to have been a member of the class baptized into the Mennonite Church in 1845 and Elizabeth probably was a member of the class of thirteen baptized by her father in 1846.

Naturally the union arrangement was not entirely satisfactory. Jacob, brother of Rev. John Risser, wrote to friends in Germany that he still is a firm Mennonite, the more so since he has read (driven to it by the "sour, bitter experiences" of his brother) good books, periodicals and church history, specifically the Augsburg Confession, the "Apologia," the "Concordien-formel," Luther's small and large Catechisms, but "fortunately" also "the Mennonite Confession of Faith by Corneliu Ris." He seems to sense the impracticability of attempting to maintain a German religious tradition in America. He asks "How can a German church endure in a land where no one studies German? How can a minister be called from a congregation in which only a few can read German and that only in a halting fashion?"

In July, 1856, after the congregation had become well established as a union church, Rev. Risser wrote about certain difficulties regarding the catechism. The pastor was using several catechisms, including the Lutheran, the Reformed, the Molenaar's (Mennonite). This was causing trouble, he says. There is to be only one catechism. But the pastor must teach the Mennonite children the catechism of their fathers. Hence, he asks his friends in Germany to send him several copies of those in use there: the Bavarian Palatinate or Ebrardt's and also the new one in use in Baden (Ullman's). He requested a copy of the Volkskalendar for the year 1856 ("der Sickinger Bote"). The congregation at that time was using Weidmann's hymnbook, but Risser feared that their few copies would wear out.[39]

[39] Rev. John Risser took a keen interest not only in church affairs in Europe and America but also in the political events of his adopted country. He wrote at considerable length about the election of Buchanan in 1856 severely blaming the Germans and the Irish for electing to power a candidate sympathetic to the extension of slavery. Although admitting that the Democratic party had the "better principles," he censured the Lutherans, and especially the Lutheran pastors, for failure to foresee that a victory for that party in this election would mean the spread of a great

Rev. John Risser became somewhat impatient with the union arrangement, at least at times, and retained his interest in Mennonite affairs and literature to the end. In 1859 he wrote, "I cannot praise our present pastor. He is a pious intelligent man and preaches well at times, but he does not suit us at all. Ours is a union congregation and we call ourselves evangelical (Reformed). He leans strongly toward the Lutherans. He does not suit us, nor we him." Later in the same year he learns that a certain German minister from the Palatinate (Molenaar) is thinking of making a visit to America. He writes at great length telling about conditions in the Mennonite Church in America[40] and offering advice on how a visiting minister, a stranger, might proceed to do the most good in an attempt to save Mennonitism in America. He strongly advises the visitor to get in touch with Oberholzer, "editor of the Mennonitenblatt," which he evidently has been reading and for which he has considerable respect. His nostalgic attachment to the Mennonite faith and principles is witnessed further by a letter to Germany dated July 6, 1861, which includes an account of a spinal ailment and extreme shortness of breath, an illness which he resignedly thinks may be his last. He expresses an earnest wish that the Mennonite minister, "Hr. Ebrard," will accept the call to the pastorate of the Salem Church.

In spite of minor instances of dissatisfaction as would be natural in a group of greatly diverse backgrounds, the Union church kept abreast of the newer trends in church work and activity. In 1858 the women of the congregation organized a sewing society which met every two or three weeks at the homes to sew for missions. In 1859 when they sold the garments which they had made during the preceding twelve months, the proceeds amounted to $18.00. Half of this was donated to home missions (die innere Mission) and half to foreign missions (die heiden Mission). At least as early as 1858 a Sunday school had been organized. All of the members of Risser's household were teachers: his daughter, Maria; his son, David; the hired man, and the hired girl. The congregation had adopted four-part singing by this time; how much earlier is not known.

In connection with his report of the Sunday school, Risser makes a comparison between morals and manners in Germany and

evil. But ten years earlier when he was still new to the country, he had fallen a gullible victim to the propaganda that Mexico had ruthlessly attacked the United States. He considered that the United States were defending themselves against the wicked encroachments of a dangerous enemy.

40 See Appendix J.

America. The comparison is extremely unfavorable to Germany. He states that he has heard less swearing in his twenty-five years in America than he did in a single year in Germany. There is no dancing in their community and practically everyone attends church services, he says.

The next piece of documentary evidence that the congregation continued to flourish is found in the minutes of the General Conference of Mennonites of North America. Jacob Risser represented the Salem Mennonite congregation at the Fourth General Conference held at Wadsworth, Ohio, in connection with the dedication of the new Mennonite school and again at the Fifth, held at Wadsworth, May 31-June 3, 1869.[41] John Risser (probably Jacob Risser's son) was the representative at the Sixth Conference, also held at Wadsworth, on October 28, 1872. After that date the Salem congregation sent no delegate to the conference although both the Seventh (November 15, 1875) and the Eighth as well as the special session of December 4, 1876, were held at Wadsworth less than forty miles away.

Possibly one reason for the failure of the congregation to send a delegate was that their young pastor, Rev. Carl Heinrich Anton van der Smissen, was living at Wadsworth with his father, Rev. Carl Justus van der Smissen.[42] One condition of the latter's coming to America to accept the principalship of the German theological department of the Mennonite school at Wadsworth was that the General Conference should finance the education in Germany of young Carl Heinrich. Then when the latter came to America in the spring of 1874, the Salem Church near Hayesville called him to the pastorate of that congregation. After a few highly satisfactory trial sermons at the Salem Church the young man was ordained to the ministry by his father in October, 1874.[43] From that date the period of authentic history of the Salem church continues.

The Reverend Carl Heinrich Anton van der Smissen was pastor of the congregation for about five years, 1874-1879. During the first three years he lived with his father's family at Wadsworth and served as pastor of two congregations: the Mennonite con-

[41] See Krehbiel, *op. cit.*, table following p. 397.

[42] Carl Justus van der Smissen was born near Altona, in Holstein, Germany, on July 14, 1811, of a wealthy family which lost its vast property holdings through pirates at sea and wars at home. He had an excellent education and aristocratic tastes and habits. When the Wadsworth school called him, he spent considerable time in negotiations regarding traveling expenses, salary, maintenance, liberal provision for the education of his son in Germany, and similar matters. (For a portrait and a more complete account see Krehbiel, *op. cit.*, 436-440.)

[43] See Appendix K.

gregation at Cleveland for whom Rev. John Risser had conducted communion services in 1835 and in 1837 and the Salem Mennonite Church near Hayesville founded by Rev. John Risser and his brother Jacob in 1834. By 1874, when young Rev. van der Smissen began his period of service, the pioneers who founded the colony had passed away. Rev. John Risser died in 1867, his wife Catharine (Weber) in 1852, and apparently all of their children had either died or moved away.[44] Jacob Risser, brother of Rev. Risser died in 1871; his wife, Maria, in 1864. Many of the pioneer "Protestanten," also, had composed their differences and had lain down together in one or the other of the twin cemeteries for their final sleep: Conrad Fuchs, in 1872; his wife, Mary, in 1852; Philip Presler in 1862; Anna Maria, wife of Heinrich Spies in 1858. A few were still living: Jacob Isamman (now spelled and pronounced Iceman) died 1877; Philip Schuck, died 1879; his wife, Margaret, died 1883; George Henry Spies, died in 1891.

When Rev. Carl Heinrich Anton van der Smissen began his pastorate, the sons and son-in-law of the pioneers were active in the life of the church and the community.[45] Many of them bore the name of their father or an uncle. John Risser, son of Jacob Risser the pioneer, assumed a leading role in the Salem congregation. So also did Jacob Miller, a later immigrant who married Maria, the pioneer Jacob Risser's daughter. Other families still remembered by Rev. van der Smissen are Herschler, Hirschler, Moser, Rees, Latschar and Ioder. The widow of John Herschler (Elizabeth Ioder, b. October 25, 1865) recalls the following families: Henry Rees, Henry Ioder,[46] John (or Jacob) Moser with two sons George and Jacob, Christian Herschler, brother of John; John Herschler, Jacob Herschler, Jacob Miller, John Risser, Daniel Krehbiel, son-in-law of John Risser; and Jacob Krieger,[47] married to Eva Herschler, sister of John Herschler. Mrs. John Herschler recalls that Peter High Stauffer, of Loudonville, attended at

[44] See Appendix L.

[45] It is disconcerting, and disappointing too, to the historian to ask for information about a certain pioneer in Ashland County. Usually after listening to a long and apparently accurate recital, he discovers that his informant is referring to a son or even a grandson of the person concerning whom he is seeking information.

[46] Because the German script "J" resembles the English script "Y", some of Henry Joder's descendants have thought that the inscription on Mary Joder's (*sic!*) tombstone in the Risser (or Miller) cemetery was an error for "Yoder." The German family Bible gives it correctly as Joder. The later spelling of the name became Ioder, to conform apparently to the pronunciation "Yoder."

[47] Jacob Krieger was not a Mennonite. Tradition records that he came to America because the Germans took Alsace-Lorraine. His descendants are members of the Stone Lutheran Church.

Salem. He was married to Augusta, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Miller, hence a granddaughter of Jacob Risser, the pioneer.

In 1878 the young people of the community made a request for some English preaching. According to Rev. van der Smissen the Methodists were willing to furnish an English pastor if the people would build a church. In 1879 Rev. van der Smissen conducted an English preaching service in the Salem Church on a Sunday afternoon when regular Reformed services had been held in the forenoon. The people of the three congregations filled the church—the Boyers and others from the Pleasant Ridge Mennonite (Old) congregation, as well as the members of the Salem Mennonite congregation and of the Lutheran-Reformed congregation (the "Protestanten," or as Rev. van der Smissen calls them, die Evangelische, that is, the Evangelicals) who jointly owned the Salem church. He preached twice more. Then the trustees of the three congregations held a meeting and after considerable discussion decided unanimously to ask him to continue preaching English. This would remove the necessity of building a new church.

But when Rev. van der Smissen called on the Reformed pastor to report the decision of the trustees, his reply was that he knew that the trustees, including those of the Old Mennonites, agree, but that no English preaching was permitted in the Salem Church. He had gone to Ashland and had ascertained that the deed specified that only the German language could be used in the church services. To verify this report Rev. van der Smissen went to Ashland to consult the county judge. This official told him that he was very sorry but that it was true.

Late the same year the English Lutherans from the town of Mifflin,[18] and some other Christian people of the community, Presbyterians and Methodists, who had been conducting an English Sunday school at the Sellers school house somewhat more than a mile northwest of the brick Mennonite church, decided to build a chapel one-half mile north. At a meeting held at the Sellers schoolhouse to discuss the erection of a building where English services could be held, William Stone offered to donate a site for the building. Thus, was erected in 1880 the Stone Lutheran Church. This congregation became the church home of Lutherans, Reformed, Salem Mennonites, and Old Mennonites—all members of the Lutheran Church.

Meanwhile Rev. Carl Heinrich Anton van der Smissen had resigned his pastorate and accepted a call to teach a German school

[18] See Appendix M.

in Pennsylvania. As already stated, he lived with his father's family at Wadsworth during the first three years of his pastorate when he preached both at Cleveland and at Salem. About 1878, however, he moved to the vicinity of the Salem Church. He lived in the home of John Risser for one year and for a short time with the Moser family. It was during this year that the young people had begun to demand English preaching.

Tradition records that he was a popular young man in the community. Single, educated, cultured and refined, he was a favorite among the younger set. But he took seriously the work of his pastorate. He preached regularly, alternating his services with those conducted by the Reformed minister, he took a deep interest in building up the congregation, he conducted classes in the Mennonite catechism. Mrs. Elizabeth (Ioder) Herschler remembers attending such a class under his instruction at the Salem church when she was fourteen years old (apparently 1879). He was on good terms with some of the Old Mennonites. When they had no services, they sometimes came to hear him preach.

He resigned his pastorate, or rather he relinquished the pastorate in 1879 in favor of his father, the Rev. Carl Justus van der Smissen, when the latter left the Mennonite General Conference school at Wadsworth and moved to Hayesville. Rev. Carl Justus had preached for the Salem congregation more or less regularly before Rev. Carl Heinrich had been ordained in 1874. The elder van der Smissen labored faithfully at Salem and tried in every possible way to promote the welfare of the congregation. Mrs. Louise (Ioder) Humm, of Ashland, younger sister of Mrs. John Herschler, remembers attending a catechism class at his home in Hayesville, the class probably being held at his home so that he would not need to ride horseback or drive to the church about three miles away. He conducted services in the rather formal manner which many of the North German Mennonites had adopted by the middle of the nineteenth century. In the pulpit he wore a long black robe and white surplice and preached in faultless High German. He encouraged the German Sunday school and the elaborate Christmas celebration dear to German immigrants and their children.

In 1879 after the Reformed minister refused to permit English preaching in the Salem Church, his parish refused to support him. Although he offered to serve the congregation without pay provided they would permit him to live in the parsonage on the old John Risser homestead, he did not receive a single vote for re-

election. There is some evidence that the two congregations met together for a period, both attending Rev. van der Smissen's preaching service. More than twenty years later Peter High Stauffer, editor of the *Loudonville Advocate* after 1875, wrote: "These people [the Mennonites and the Lutheran-Reformed who worshiped at the Salem Church] were all musical and for years this little country church could boast of having the best choir and the best congregational singing of any religious organization in the county. People from the towns and surrounding county frequently attended services there to hear the music [singing], and the choir was often invited to sing in other churches."[49]

Although the congregation was small and the enforced use of the German language arrested its growth, Rev. van der Smissen labored on faithfully and earnestly. "He lived in Hayesville and was much liked by the people," wrote P. H. Stauffer. "He was said to be the most highly cultured and best educated scholar of the Mennonite Church in America." He continued faithful in his ministry to his death in 1890, preaching at Salem a scant six weeks before his death. He served most acceptably for more than twelve years. In spite of his faultless High German, the aging members of the Mennonite (Old) congregation at Pleasant Ridge came sometimes to the Salem church to hear him preach. At the funeral of Mrs. Sarah (Moyer) Boyer in 1886 he conducted the service in the Pleasant Ridge Church, assisted by Rev. Hoover of the Brethren in Christ Church, and a certain Rev. Murray. The year following his death, in 1891, his widow, Sara Cornelia van der Smissen, moved to Summerfield, Illinois, next door to her son, Rev. Carl Heinrich Anton van der Smissen, mentioned above. She died in 1901 at the age of eighty-seven.[50] The last surviving member of the congregation was John Herschler who retained his devotion to the Mennonite church and her institutions to the last. Herschler's widow, Mrs. Elizabeth (Ioder) Herschler, mentioned several times above, is enjoying her comfortable residence in the city of Ashland and is much interested in charitable work.

[49] From an article written by Peter High Stauffer and preserved among the papers of Professor Frank S. Fox, born at Hayesville in 1861, and founder of the Capitol School of Elocution and Oratory at Columbus, Ohio. This article, very valuable in spite of a few inaccuracies, was sent to the writer by Mrs. Dale Linn, the former Louise Fox of Ashland, Ohio, State Chairman of Genealogical Records and a descendant of the Fox pioneers. The writer is indebted also to Dr. J. Winfield Fretz for pointing out a reprinting of another article on the same subject by Peter High Stauffer. See *Mennonite Year Book and Almanac* (General Conference) *for* 1903, pp. 31-2.

[50] From her obituary notice in *The Mennonite* copied by the *Herald of Truth*, XXXVIII (1901), 158.

After the death of Rev. Carl Justus van der Smissen, Mennonite ministers in Wayne and Stark counties occasionally held services in the Salem Church. Among them were Joel Lehman, of Dalton, pastor of the Salem church (General Conference) in the Sonnenberg neighborhood, and apparently also Rev. H. J. Krehbiel, the General Conference minister, who tried unsuccessfully to revive the dying Mennonite congregation in Canton, Ohio, originally known as the Rowland Church. But the Lutheran congregation at the Stone Church with its English services, live Sunday school, good singing and fine spirit of fellowship, offered competition that the declining German congregation at the brick church could not meet. Finally in the summer of 1901 a crashing thunderbolt and a windstorm of cyclonic porportions damaged the building beyond repair. The whole west end collapsed. The older German-speaking members had passed away and the younger people preferred the English services at the Stone Church. Hence, in the spring of 1902 the *Salemskirche* was torn down and became only a memory. The former site of the building lies in the cemetery and is now the location of several graves. The furniture and salvaged building materials were sold and the proceeds devoted to missionary purposes. The communion set and the pulpit were shipped to Deer Creek, Oklahoma, and presented to the Mennonite Church[51] of which Rev. M. S. Moyer was pastor and to which several former members of the Salem church belonged.[52]

On account of the close connection between the two congregations worshiping in the old log church and later in the brick church, the Salem church in Section Five, the history of the Mennonite congregation does not seem complete without a brief summary of the history of the other congregation. Some of the members were Lutherans, some Reformed. Rev. John Risser always referred to them as *Protestanten*. Rev. C. H. A. van der Smissen still speaks of them as the Evangelicals, because he says the Reformed church was known by that name in Germany. The descendants of the pioneers seem not to know which of their ancestors were Lutheran, which Reformed. Since the names of their later ministers

51 A granddaughter of the pioneer Jacob Risser, Mrs. Peter High Stauffer, purchased the stand used as an altar and a few other keepsakes. According to an editorial in the *Loudonville Advocate* written during the midsummer of 1902 by P. H. Stauffer, the communion set had been donated by Rev. (Carl Justus?) van der Smissen. Daniel Krehbiel, according to Stauffer, was a member of the Deer Creek Church. He had been a member, twenty years earlier, of the Salem Chuch and at that time, assisted by John Heckman and David Hirschler, had built the pulpit.

52 See the article, "The Deer Creek Church in Grant County, Oklahoma," in *Mennonite Year Book and Almanac for* 1903, p. 35, for a brief history of this church written by the pastor, M. S. Moyer.

at the Salem Church, Rev. Gockenheimer and Rev. Stunger, do not appear on the list of any Ashland County Lutheran ministers, it seems highly probable that these ministers were German Reformed. Rev. John Risser's preference for the German language and for the German Reformed ministers may have had something to do with their selection as pastors of the non-Mennonite group at Salem. As already stated, their parsonage was located along the highway near the south boundary of Rev. Risser's farm.

The nearby St. Michaels Lutheran Church at Mifflin introduced English preaching at least as early as 1843.[53] The Zion Lutheran Church near Lucas, has the almost unbelievable record of having been an English congregation or at least of having English preaching, almost from the beginning in the early thirties.[54]

But on account of the predominance of German-speaking people, Mennonites, Brethren in Christ, Lutheran, and Reformed in northern Mifflin Township and in northern Vermillion, it was difficult to support or even to organize an English church or Sunday school in that area. But several families of Methodists and Presbyterians living near the Salem Church desired English services. The young people worshiping at the Salem Church and the Pleasant Ridge Mennonite Church also desired English services, especially an English Sunday school. As already pointed out, the Salem Church would have been the logical location of such activities, but the contract drawn up in 1847 and again in 1853 prescribed that only German services could be conducted in that building. A German Sunday school had been organized there at least as early as 1858.

Meanwhile, Reverend Wilhelm, pastor of St. Michaels Lutheran Church in Mifflin, had been conducting an English preaching

[53] Several Mennonite families or families of Mennonite ancestry lived in the vicinity of Mifflin at an early date and buried their dead in the cemetery on the hillside at the southeastern corner of the village. In this poorly-kept, weed-grown burial ground occur the names Brenizer, Shelly, Troup, Hoff, Long, Kauffman, and Crider (*sic*!). Here also lie John Hershey, d. August 1, 1853, a. 53-0-8, his wife Elizabeth, d. May 3, 1847, a. 44-3-12; Sarah, wife of B. N. Hershey, d. December 24, 1855, a. 22 yr.; a Joseph and Harriet Hostetter; a daughter Adam and Susannah Bare who died in 1835; a daughter of James M. and Sarah Hartman, d. January 20, 1835 aged six months; Catharine, "consort of John Stauffer, d. March 2, 1869, a. 65-8-20. A large monument marks the graves of Benjamin Stahman (*sic*!), d. October 18, 1885, a. 75-10-17; Anna, his wife, d. April 15, 1878, a. 73-5-8; Jacob Stahman, d. October 21, 1857, a. 74-5-4; and Barbara, his wife, d. July 16, 1855, a. 65-4-9. Beside the Stahman plot two small white marble slabs, such as marked Mennonite graves at an earlier period, spell the name Stehman.

[54] Members of the Lutheran Church are said to have reached Richland county east of Mansfield as early as 1812. A certain Rev. Ruth conducted English preaching services at Bucyrus in 1833. Because the members at Ashland insisted on German preaching he resigned. He introduced English preaching at Mt. Zion in 1833 after preaching German for several years.

service and an English Sunday school in the Sheller schoolhouse about one half mile west of the present Stone Lutheran Church on Sunday afternoons during the late seventies. Attendance and interest were good. The people of the community, especially the young people from Salem and Pleasant Ridge attended in considerable numbers. After it became known that the Salem Church never could be opened to English services, the Sunday school workers at the Sheller schoolhouse held a meeting to consider the erection of a suitable chapel. In the course of the discussion William Stone announced that he would donate a plot of land for a church. A building committee was appointed and the ceremony for the laying of the corner stone was held on June 7, 1880. The broad-mindedness of Rev. Carl Justus van der Smissen, pastor of the Salem Mennonite congregation, is evidenced by his acceptance of a part on the program.

Being the only English church in a rural center four or five miles from the nearest town and being in a sense a community church, the membership was drawn from a number of different denominations. Some of the English names must have seemed rather odd on the membership list of a Lutheran church at that early date when in many sections to be a Lutheran was almost synonymous with being German. The Stones and the Buchanans were received by letter. Others transferred their membership from the German Lutheran-Reformed congregation (Salem). Some members were received by baptism; some, on confession of faith. Mennonite, Brethren and Presbyterian congregations issued letters to members who wished to transfer to the new Lutheran church. Two Boyer families, Abraham and Peter, sons of Abraham M. Boyer, the last surviving member of the Pleasant Ridge Mennonite Church, became Lutheran. Their sister, Alice, who had learned the catechism and had been baptised into the Salem Church by a Lutheran minister, Rev. Cochel, on February 18, 1882, also united with the Stone Lutheran Church and is still a faithful member.[55] Other

[55] Alice Boyer, now Mrs. Allie M. Yeater, gave the writer valuable assistance in collecting material for this history. She also donated to the Mennonite Historical Society the Boyer German Family Bible as well as books from her late father's library and some which were used in the church services at Pleasant Ridge. The family Bible, donated to the Mennonite Historical Library at Goshen College by Mrs. Yeater, preserves the following record: "Abraham M. Boyer, born June the 23rd, 1830; Barbary (*sic*!) Nusbaum, born January 21st, 1834; Peter Boyer, born May the 12th, 1852; George W. Boyer, born June the 8th, 1854; Anna Boyer, born May the 30th, 1857; Sarah Boyer, born June 13, 1859; Abraham Nusbaum Boyer, born April 12, 1861; Joseph Boyer, born January 13, 1864; Maria A[lice] Boyer, born April 26, 1868. Rev. G. Z. Cochel who baptized Mrs. Yeater entered the ministry in 1871 and came to the Wittenberg Synod from the East Ohio Synod in 1900. He retired in 1914.

Allie Boyer and Abby Rowland, daughter of Samuel Rowland, now Mrs. John

names well-known in Mennonite congregations but appearing on the membership roll of the Stone Church are Miller, Bauman, Eby, Kurtz, Baum, Markley, Rowland, Huber, Bender, Risser, and Stofer.

Relations between the various religious groups in the community were usually friendly. On one occasion while the Stone Church was being redecorated, the congregation held services in the brick church (Salem). At a later date while their building was being remodeled and after the brick church had been torn down, the Lutheran congregation held services, including a communion service, at the Pleasant Ridge Mennonite Church. The Lutheran-Reformed congregation at the Salem Church dissolved entirely during the eighties, several years before the German Mennonite congregation, and practically all of the surviving members united with the Stone Church. These included the names Fox, Schwan, Schuck, Rohleder, Scherf (now written Sheriff),[56] Krieger, Wolf, and others.

At present the Stone Lutheran Church is part of the Jeromesville Lutheran Parish of which the Reverend C. E. Moore, S.T.M., is pastor.[57] The parsonage is located near the Trinity Lutheran Church in Jeromesville. Services are conducted by the pastor at both churches each Sunday morning. The congregation at Stone continues the tradition of spirited congregational singing. They also have an excellent choir of which the pastor is an appreciated member. Tully Fox, descended from the German Fuchs pioneers, is superintendent of the live Sunday school.

Risser, of Hayesville, were baptized on the same day after prolonged catechetical instruction including memorization of the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' creed, the Ten Comandments, and the catechism.

[56] Buried in the Pleasant Ridge Cemetery is Valentine Scherf (Sheriff), d. December 30, 1860, a. 67-10-16; also his wife, Anna C., d. July 19, 1859, a. 70-9-15. Several markers in this cemetery bear the name of Stone, Sheller, and Wilhelm.

[57] Rev. Moore, who lives in the Lutheran parsonage, has charge of all the records of the Stone Lutheran Church. These records contain a complete membership list, baptisms, marriages, deaths, and other valuable historical information.

APPENDIX A

[See Footnote 2, page 6]

The newer of these, the one on the northwest corner, was first known as the Risser cemetery, named for Jacob Risser the first Mennonite owner, and later as the Miller cemetery. Jacob Miller, husband of Jacob Risser's daughter Mary, owned the property after Risser's death. The other was the Strickland cemetery, named for the owners of the property during the third and fourth decades of the last century.

The Strickland cemetery, originally a plot of ground containing about eighty-three square rods in the northwest corner of the northeast quarter of Section Eight in Vermillion Township was deeded to Jacob Grabill, William Strickland and James Campbell, "Trustees of the Burying Ground," by Joseph and Mary Strickland on May 26, 1856. On October 25, 1884, the trustees of the cemetery, C. A. Barton, George Rohleder, and William Strickland, deeded it to the "Trustees of Vermillion Township." The older burials in this cemetery indicate that originally this was the "English" burial ground, where the Stricklands, Campbells and others interred their dead. For many years, however, this has been a community cemetery used by all faiths and races. Among the names on the gravestones are: Doerrer (born about 1810), Moser, Krieger, Gongwer, Rohleder, Fox (second generation), Wolf, Rees, Steinhage, Christian Herschler (1803-1887), Christian Hirschler (1829-1905), Anna Colin, his wife (1836-1882), and others, including the Reverend Carl Justus van der Smissen, five members of the Reverend John Risser family, and five members of the John Risser, Sr., family. The latter was known as "senior" to distinguish him from his son, John, still living in Hayesville, Ohio. He and his wife, *nee* Grabill, and three of their daughters are buried in a plot near the north boundary of the cemetery.

The other, the "Risser" or "Miller" cemetery, was the burial ground used by the "Germans," the Mennonites, Reformed, and the Lutherans. Early burials in the cemetery were chiefly of the early German pioneers: Engle, Risser, Schmitt, Schwan, Fox, Lich, Miller, Schuck, Spies, Isaman, Pressler, Joder and others. Here also are the graves of the pioneer Jacob Risser (1795-1871), and his wife Maria (1801-1864) and of their three infant sons. And here repose their daughter, Maria (1827-1911) and her husband, Jacob Miller (1824-1917), born in Bavaria, the son of Michael Miller who came to America in 1830 and located in the Amish settlement in Wayne County, Ohio, seven miles northeast of Wooster. Jacob Miller married Mary Risser in 1850, and in 1860 moved on his father-in-law's farm. A few recent burials in this cemetery indicate that it is being used again since the other is becoming somewhat crowded.

The Ashland County Deed Record (CXL, 314) preserves the record of the transfer of the Risser or Miller cemetery to the trustees of Vermillion Township. This deed, executed by Jacob Miller on August 21, 1901, refers to Miller as the "last surviving trustee of the Mennoniten (sic!) Church in the northwest part of Vermillion Township." This transfer seems to have been made soon after the building was razed. The area of the cemetery is one-half acre.

Hill, the Ashland County historian, preserves a brief record of some of the pioneers who sleep their last sleep in the twin cemeteries. Philip Pressler (1791?-1862) had a daughter, Margaret, who came with her parents from Pennsylvania to Ohio in 1822 and married Jacob Stauffer on July 22, 1847. After his death in 1852 she married Jacob Isaman (1802-1875). Two of her sons by her first marriage were married.

Conrad Fox (1796-1872) came to America in 1833. Two of his sons, David, born in 1819, and Frederick, born in 1822, became prominent figures in Ashland County. A certain Frederick Fox, born in Ashland County on January 7, 1842, died on October 30, 1912. He was a member of the Church of the Brethren. His grandson, married to a Miss Hartman, lives near Paradise Hill. The Frederick Fox home was one-half mile east of the Salem Church. Frank S. Fox learned to read and write German at the school conducted in the church building. Later he was a member of the faculty of Ashland College and still later the founder of the Capitol School of Elocution and Oratory at Columbus, Ohio. Mrs. Dale Linn, of Ashland, the former Louise Fox, is a descendant of the Fox pioneers. She is State Chairman of Genealogical Records and has given the writer important facts connected with the history of the Salem Church, also an early picture of the building.

APPENDIX B

[See Footnote 3, page 6]

These eight letters were copied by Karl Weber, of Kassel, in the spring of 1928. At that time the originals of the first four letters were in the possession of Karl Schmidt in Worms, a son-in-law of Henry Weaver (Heinrich Weber) in Kindenheim. Schmidt had printed these four in the *Wormser Zeitung* in February and March, 1923. Karl Weber himself had the last four in his possession. They had been written to his grandfather, Peter Weber.

The writers and addresses were as follows: (page numbers refer to sheets in the bound copy of the letters. Only recto pages are numbered.)

1. Katharina Risser to Elizabeth Leisy in Friedelsheim (July 14, 1832), page 1.
2. Katharina Risser and (from page 5) John Risser her mother and sisters and friends (Jacob Weber) in Kindenheim (July 25, 1832) page 4.
3. Katharina Risser to her mother and brothers and sisters (October 6, 1832) page 8.
4. John Risser to Jacob Weber in Kindenheim (January 6, 1833) page 18.
5. John Risser to Peter Weber in Kindenheim (July 3, 1834) page 81.
6. John Risser to Peter, Jacob, and Maria Weber in Kindenheim (October 18, 1834) page 96.
7. John Risser to Peter Weber in Kindenheim (June 23, 1846) page 110.
8. Jacob Risser to Peter Weber in Kindenheim (December 10, 1850) page 121.

Karl Weber adds two entire pages of names of German emigrants named in the letters (pages 137-8) and a map of Ohio and Pennsylvania and parts of New York and New Jersey to show the location of the Ashland county settlement and the route followed by John Risser from New York to Ohio.

APPENDIX C

[See Footnote 4 Page 6]

Most, but not all, of these thirty letters were written by the Reverend John Risser to his friends in the Palatinate. Only one bears an outside address. This letter, signed by Rev. Risser, carried a notice that twenty-five cents postage had been prepaid. It was written on April 25 and mailed from Hayesville (Hayes Cross Roads Post Office) on May 2, 1836. The addressee was Jacob Leisy at Friedelsheim near Dürkheim in the

Bavarian Palatinate in the district of Speyer. It bore the additional notation "To New York for Havre Packet."

Following is a complete list of the letters with the inside address, part of the salutation, the name of the addressee, if given, and the name of the writer, if signed.

Beuggen, January 15, 1833. To "dear friend Jacob Eiman" at Bindesheim, Signed, Ch. Staufer.

Hayes Cross Roads Post Office, August 14, 1835. To "dear Sister Maria Weber." Signed, John Risser.

(Richland County) to "dear mother and brothers and sisters." Date, determined by internal evidence, after March 1, 1835, Signed by Anna Krebill (*sic*!).

Richland County, September 23, 1835. To "my dear sister-in-law" Signed, John Risser.

Hayes Cross Roads Post Office, April 25, 1836. To "dear sister and brother-in-law Jacob Leisy at Friedelsheim." Signed, John Risser.

Cross Roads Post Office, February 12, 1838. To "dear Sister Maria." Signed, John Risser.

Hayes Cross Roads Post Office, March 15, 1841. To dear sister and brother-in-law." Signed, John Risser.

Ashland County Post Office, January 20, 1843. To "my dear brother and sisters, Elizabeth, Peter, Maria, and all yours." Signed, John Risser.

Ashland Postoffice, December 29, 1844. To "my dear Sister Elizabeth." Signed, John Risser.

Ashland, January 27, 1845. To Dear Father [Rev. John Risser] Signed, Ch[arlotte] R[isser].

Ashland Post Office, March 13, 1845. To "dear friend and brother in the Lord." Signed, John Risser.

(Ashland) No date—probably about 1849 or 1850. To "dear brother-in-law and sister." "A brief Summary of the Regrettable History of the Bequest" [for the Salem Church].

Post Office, Hayesville, Ohio October 24, 1850. To "dear Sisters." Since this four-page letter was continued on another sheet, which is lacking, the signature is missing. Written by John Risser.

Ashland County, Ohio, January 13, 1850. To "dear brother-in-law and sister." Signed, John Risser.

(Ashland)—No date, but probably written in 1849 or 1850. A four-page account entitled "Principal Reasons for the breaking up and discontinuance of our church services and of our congregation." Incomplete and unsigned, but written in the almost microscopic script of Rev. John Risser.

(Ashland) Another four-page letter undated. To "dear brother-in-law and sister" in the handwriting of Rev. John Risser, protesting and complaining that they have not replied to his "Account of the dissolution" of the Salem Congregation.

Ashland Post Office, November 24, 1852. To "dear brother-in-law and sister." Signed John Risser.

Ashland County, April 25, 1853. To "dear friends." Signed "M.W."

Ashland County, July 13, 1854. To "dear brother and sister." Signed, John Risser.

Two pages. no date, no signature, written in Rev. John Risser's handwriting about 1855.

Ashland County, February 28, 1856. To "dear brother-in-law and sister." Signed, John Risser.

Ashland County, March 30, 1857. To "my dear brother-in-law and sister." Signed, John Risser.

Ashland County, January 4, 1858. To "dear brother-in-law and sister." Signed, John Risser.

January, 1859. To "my dear brother-in-law, Jacob Eyman, and my two sisters," a letter in two sections "A" and "B" of eight pages each. Signed, John Risser.

Ashland County, February, 12, 1859. To "dear brother-in-law and sister." Signed, John Risser.

Ashland County, June 28, 1859. To "Lieber Herr Pfarrer" [Molenaar], at Monsheim. Signed, John Risser.

Ashland County, July 6, 1861. To "dear brother-in-law, J.[acob?] Eyman." Signed, John Risser.

Ashland, Ohio, August 24, 1865. To "dear Nephew, Abraham Risser." Part of letter missing. In the handwriting of John Risser.

"Information regarding our friends [relatives] in Germany, who they are," etc., written apparently, by John Risser. Possibly by some one else.

Part of a letter written by a former Mennonite soldier to "Vetter Risser." Signed by Jakob Blim (?).

APPENDIX D

The following partial list of land purchases in and south of Ashland may be interesting as indicating where some of the early arrivals settled:

1817 John Kroft purchased one and one-fourth acres in what is now the center of the city of Ashland. (A certain John Kroft (Kraft) and his wife, Elizabeth, purchased land near Bucyrus, Crawford County, Ohio, in 1825 and sold it in 1832. In 1834 they purchased a tract in the same county not far south of the Seneca County Mennonite Church where some of the Krofts were members.)

1821 Jacob Reed, one-half mile west of Hayesville

1826 Joseph Strickland, 85 acres where the southeastern of the twin cemeteries is located.

1833 (Rev.) John Risser, 80 acres. This is the John Risser homestead mentioned several times in the present article.

1834 Jacob Risser, 160 acres, the quarter section where the northwestern of the twin cemeteries is located.

1836 Christian Herschler, 80 acres for $1000.00 one mile east of Mifflin.

1836 Jacob Risser, Lot 48 in the City of Ashland.

1836 John Rode (Roth?) from Samuel and Elizabeth Dome (Daum?) southwest of Five Points.

1837 Jacob Risser, 40 acres from Benjamin Musser, one mile southwest of Five Points.

1837 Abraham Hoff from Michael Hoff, one mile east of Mifflin.

1838 Christian Risser, Lots 121 and 122 in Ashland for $93.00.

1838 Jacob Risser from Christian Reif, 30 acres one and one-half mile west, two miles north of the twin cemeteries.

1838 Christian Herschler, 80 acres for $1000.00, one mile east of the present location of the Stone Lutheran Church.

1840 Jacob Risser, 36 acres two miles west of the twin cemeteries and adjoining John Beutler on the west.

1840 Joseph Krehbiel, 80 acres adjoining the Rev. John Risser homestead on the west.

1841 John Risser, east of the John Risser 1832 purchase, 27 acres.
1842 Christian Eichelbarger "of Richland (later Ashland) County" 80 acres near the Wood County Mennonite Church. (The Eichelbargers left Richland County at an early date.)
1845 Jacob S. Risser, 75 acres from Mahlon Strickland, one-quarter mile east of the Strickland cemetery.
1845 Christian R. Risser, Lot 118 in the City of Ashland.
1846 Christian K. Risser, Lots 49 and 50 in the City of Ashland.
1847 John Achilburger (Eichelbarger) buys in Wood County.
1849 Friedrich Bötscher and his wife, Susan, sell to Philip Kilmer a small tract of land about two miles west of the twin cemeteries and south of the road. (He signed his name in German and she in English.)
1848 Christian Risser, of Ashland County, purchased 160 acres in Wood County from John C. Hunsicker. (Some of the Rissers left Ashland County during the period of difficulty in 1847-49.)
1851 Katharina Krehbiel, widow of Joseph Krehbiel sold the 80 acres purchased by her husband in 1840. The money was to be paid to her daughter in installments. Johannes Latschar was one of the witnesses.
1856 John Latschar, Lots 90, 91 and 92 in Hayesville.
1858 John Risser, Sr., Lot 1 in Graham's Addition for $1800.00. Also on the same date, the southwest quarter of Section Nineteen in Montgomery Township for $5700.00.
1859 David Risser from his father, Rev. John Risser—the old Risser homestead south and west of the twin cemeteries.

APPENDIX E

Reference to the name, Jacob Risser, was so common as to be quite confusing. Preacher John Risser's sons were: John, Jacob, Abraham, Peter, Daniel, and the American-born David. The sons of Jacob Risser, the brother of Preacher John Risser were: John, Abraham, Jacob, and the American-born Peter. Christian Risser, the shoemaker, was the father of Abraham, Christian A(chilbarger?), and Daniel. Henry, the brother of Christian, was the father of Jacob, Lewis, Henry, Bartholomew, and Christian. Jacob Risser, the brother of Christian the shoemaker, and of Henry, may have been the Jacob Risser, also a shoemaker who lived in Ashland County for a short time and distilled brandy for Krehbil. At one time he went to Mansfield to apply for a position as apprentice at a brewery. Jacob Risser, the shoemaker, was a son of Rev. John Risser's "Vetter Abraham Risser" and spent part of the winter of 1835-36 in Cincinnati in the employ of Abraham Wolf. A little later he was making beer. A Jacob Risser, the nephew of Rev. John Risser and his brother Jacob, moved to Henry County, Ohio, in the spring of 1850, contracted malaria or typhoid fever during the summer and died in November leaving a widow and three children. He had a brother, John Risser, who was a preacher in Germany. Jacob Risser, the son of Rev. John Risser, died on June 9, 1846, leaving a young wife and a fifteen weeks old child. Another Jacob Risser was killed—crushed between two railroad cars—in Putnam County, Ohio, on August 21, 1871. He was born in Haardt near Dürkheim in the Bavarian Palatinate about November 20, 1833.

APPENDIX F

In 1850, Rev. John Risser's brother, Jacob, wrote a letter to their relatives in Europe complaining bitterly because Rev. Risser had failed to apply to the building fund for their church certain donations sent to him for that purpose by the relatives in Germany. In that letter Jacob Risser accuses his brother, John, the preacher, not only of withholding the funds but also of attempting to return that part of the money which had been contributed by persons still living, in order to forestall an investigation into the misappropriation of funds which had been bequeathed by their mother, now deceased, for the building of the church. Jacob Risser writes that he hopes that his true, detailed presentation of his brother's dishonorable, peace-destroying, stubborn refusal (von dieser so ehrenrührigen und friedestörenden hartnäckigen Weigerung meines Bruders) to use the funds for their designated purpose will prompt their brother-in-law to vigorous action. These instances indicate that Preacher John Risser's usually energetic, public-spirited efforts to build a strong German Mennonite colony may have been thwarted in part by his own self-seeking spirit, his tactlessness, indiscretion, and selfwill. Risser's failure to direct the discussion regarding the building of the church in 1847 with firm impartiality and in a frank co-operative spirit split the congregation into factions, grieved some of his warmest supporters even among his relatives, and eventually cost him his pastorate.

APPENDIX G

Among the candidates for baptism was, probably, Risser's own daughter, Charlotte (Lottchen), who had been profoundly moved while attending protracted meetings conducted at the Presbyterian Church in Ashland during the preceding January while she had been employed in that city. Her letter is an interesting document showing the effect of pietistic forms of religious experience on young Mennonites. Since other Mennonite young people in Ashland County no doubt had similar experiences, not only in the Presbyterian Church but also in the protracted meetings held by the Brethren in Christ and by the United Brethren in Christ, it seems worth while to print her letter in its entirety. It is important, also for the light which it sheds on the attitude of the Risser family toward the question of the survival of the Ashland County Mennonite Church and of Risser's relation to the Reformed Church during the period when he was inactive in his ministry.

Following is a literal transcription of Charlotte Risser's letter to her father and a translation, for the benefit of an increasing number of readers who do not read German.

Ashland den 27ten Januar 1845

Lieber Vater:

Da ich keine Aussicht habe, dich bald persönlich zu sehen und zu sprechen, indem der Weg zu schlecht ist, so ergreife ich die Feder, um dir mein Anliegen auf diese Art bekannt zu machen. — Es wird dir bekannt sein, dass die Prespiterianer (*sic!*) hier gegenwärtig verlängerte Versammlungen haben: ich besuchte sie fleissig, wurde bald zu tiefem Nachdenken gebracht, und wurde überzeugt, dass um ein Christ zu sein, mehr als blos die aüssere Form erfordert ist, und dass Gott von seinen Kindern mehr Liebe und Gehorsam begehrt, als den ich besass. Ich fasste da den festen Entschluss Gott zu suchen. Ein drückender Kummer lag mir von da an auf meinem Herzen, und kein weltliches Vergnügen konnte mir Freude machen, meine

Sünden traten mir lebhaft vor Augen, und ich fühlte dass Gott mir nicht nahe war. Abends nachc der Kirche wurde (wie es bei solchen Fällen gebrauchlich ist) einem Jeden Gelegenheit gegeben mit dem Prediger über seinen Seelenzustand zu reden, oder nachher zu ihm auf sein Zimmer zu kommen. Ich blieb einige Mal sitzen, und der Prediger sprach mit einem Jeden, der sitzen blieb, besonders, sehr rührend, und munterte hauptsächlich zum lesen der Bibel und zum anhaltenden Gebete auf. Ich glaubte oft, dass ich entweder nicht ernstlich genug und von Herzen bete, oder es gar keine Veränderung des Herzens gäbe. Doch Gott sei dank! es änderte sich bald, all mein Kummer verschwand, und ein süsser Friede bemächtigte sich meiner. Ich empfinde jetzt das reinste Vergnügen in dem Gottesdienste, und die Bibel ist mir interessant und erbaulich, was sie mir vorher nie war: ich las nur den geschichtlichen Theil davon wenn ich sonst nichts zu lesen hatte.

Mein Verstand, Vater, sagte mir von jeher, dass ich getauft und in eine Kirche aufgenommen werden sollte; aber jetzt ist es der Wunsch meines Herzens; ich sehe nicht nur die Nothwendigkeit dazu ein, sondern ich fühle sie auch; und wären jetzt die Umständen wie früherhin da unsre Kirche danieder lag, so wäre es mein innigster Wunsch in diese Kirche aufgenommen zu werden. Ich sprach mit Bruder Peter und Johannes darüber, und beide meinten, das könne immer noch recht gut geschehen, indem es dein Vorhaben sei, den deutschen reformirten Pfarrer von Wooster kommen zu lassen, uns zu unterrichten und zu taufen; da sei dann nur der Unterschied, dass der hiesige english reformirt, und jener deutsch reformirt sei; und sollte es je geschehen, dass sich unsere Kirche auflöse, so gehörte ich alsdann doch noch zu einer Kirche, was auf der andern Seite nicht der Fall wäre. Ich könnte fernerhin unsrer Kirche regkelmässig beiwohnen, und die übrige Zeit in die hiesige gehen, könnte hier zum Abendmahl gehen und auch dort. Ich glaube dass Daniel auch grosse Neigung hat zu dieser Kirche, und in diesem Falle könnten wir beide zu gleicher Zeit getauft werden. Mit dem Prediger habe ich noch nicht darüber gesprochen, und will es auch nicht thun, bis ich deinen väterlichen Rath weiss.

Ich schliesse mit dem Wunsch, dass du mir so bald als möglich antworten möchtest, und verbleibe

deine gehorsame Tochter
Ch[arlotte] R[isser]

Translation:

Ashland, January 27, 1845

Dear Father,

Since I have no prospect of seeing you soon and speaking with you because the roads are so bad, I take up my pen to acquaint you in this manner with my concern. You probably know that the Presbyterians are conducting protracted meetings here at present. I attended regularly was soon brought under deep conviction and became convinced that in order to be a Christian more is required than mere outward form and that God desires from his children more love and obedience than I possessed. I firmly resolved to seek God. A depressing sorrow lay upon my heart and no worldly pleasure could give me joy. My sins stood vividly before my eyes and I felt that God was not near me. Evenings after meeting (as is customary in such cases) each one was given an opportunity to speak with the minister about his spiritual condition or afterward to visit him in his study. I remained seated several times and the minister spoke personally in a very touching manner with each one who remained seated, and especially

recommended Bible reading and prevailing prayer. I often believed either that I did not pray earnestly enough or that there was no such thing as a change of heart. But thanks be to God! a change soon came, all my grief vanished, and a sweet peace took possession of me. I now experience the purest pleasure in the church service and the Bible is interesting and edifying to me which it never was before. I read only the historical portions of it when I had nothing else to read.

My reason always told me, Father, that I ought to be baptized and received into the church, but now it is the wish of my heart. I not only understand the necessity of it, but I feel it too. And if circumstances were now as they were earlier when our congregation was broken up, it would be my inmost wish to be received into this church. I spoke with brother Peter and brother John about it and both thought that this might be done very well since it is your intention to have the German Reformed minister come from Wooster to instruct and to baptize us. There would be only this difference, that the local minister is English Reformed [Rev. John Risser usually referred to the Presbyterians as "English Reformed"] and the other German Reformed. And if it should ever happen that our [Reformed] congregation would be dissolved then I should still be a member of a church which would not be true in the other case. Furthermore, I could attend our [Reformed] services regularly and the remaining time attend the local church. I could attend communion services here, and there too. I believe that Daniel also feels strongly attracted to this church and in that case both of us could be baptized at the same time. I have not spoken with the minister about it, nor will I do so until I know your fatherly counsel.

I close with the wish that you may give me your answer as soon as possible, and remain

Your obedient daughter,
Ch[arlotte] R[isser]

APPENDIX H

The Mennonites who signed the agreement were John Risser (probably the eldest son of Preacher John Risser, but possibly the son of Preacher Jacob Risser), John Latschar, Christian Risser (probably the shoemaker living in Ashland), and Christian Herschler. The Protestants were T(heodor?), Ph(ilip) Conradi, D(avid) Schwan, K(onrad) Fuchs and Karl Boettscher. The agreement was signed on August 7, 1847, and is recorded in the *Ashland County Deed Record,* Vol. II, p. 218.

For some reason a similar agreement was signed on February 28, 1853, and carefully copied in a good German hand in the *Ashland County Deed Record,* Vol. XV, p. 69, on April 14, 1858. The reason for the second contract, identical with the first, is not clear. Neither is it clear why it was not recorded until 1858 almost two months after the date when the contract was to expire. The second contract was signed by Conrad Fuchs, Christian Vesper, Philip Schuck, Michael Vesper, William Zeitler, Conrad Fuchs, David Schwan, John Rething, and Heinrich Spisy (*sic!*) for the "Protestanten" and for the "Mennoniten" by Jacob Risser, John Latschar, Christian Herschler, Christian Eyman, and John Risser.

One clause in this agreement was to spell the doom of both congregations a quarter of a century later. Only German services could be held in the building! Thus, ironically almost, the dead hand of Rev. John Risser wiped out both the church building and the congregation which he had labored so long and so earnestly to establish. It is possible that this part

of the agreement was intended to prevent the English-speaking Lutherans at Mifflin from gaining a foothold in the community. This, as will be noted later, they eventually did.

APPENDIX I

Rev. John Risser and the schoolteacher John Roth had decided in 1833 to erect a combined school building and meeting house and tried to interest their neighbors in the project. Preacher Peter Beutler refused his aid, but stated that he would send some of his children to the school. When the subscription list was completed, the amount pledged was so small that Rev. Risser solicited funds from his friends at the Weierhof in the Bavarian Palatinate. They promised some money and Risser told Roth how much he expected. But before the money arrived from Germany "very pitiable and painful changes" had come about. First, there was lack of unity regarding the location of the building. "The Riefernheimer," probably the Lutheran neighbors, wished the meetinghouse at another place. And, second, disagreement regarding Roth's salary as schoolteacher had alienated Roth and Risser, Roth moving to Clarence Center or Williamsville, New York, whither he was followed in 1836 by Daniel Krehbiel. When the brick church was erected in 1847-8, the amount subscribed was not sufficient to complete the building. Jacob Risser, who had been informed by Roth regarding the fund held by Rev. John Risser, persuaded his friends to subscribe enough money to wipe out the deficit and promised that they would be reimbursed from the fund held by Rev. Risser. The latter, failing or refusing to relinquish the money for this purpose, Jacob wrote a long letter to his Weierhof relatives urging them to bring pressure on Rev. Risser to apply the funds to the purpose for which they were donated.

Rev. Risser seems to have been a strange combination of public spiritedness and selfishness, of efficiency and carelessness. A community builder and promoter, he was at the same time a powerful centrifugal force, dividing and dissipating the spiritual energies of his congregation and his community. He was deeply interested in organizing and maintaining a Mennonite congregation and a German school. But, as already hinted, one reason for building up a congregation may have been to profit from the sale of land to new settlers and to provide himself with a remunerative pastorate. Even his interest in the school had in it a large element of selfishness, involving cheap tuition rates for his children, profit from the sale or rental of land, the education of his son, Peter, to become the teacher of the school, and similar evidences of an extremely practical turn of mind which in itself, if combined with the necessary tact, might not have been wholly worthy of condemnation.

After his brother Jacob wrote to Germany accusing him of wrongfully and stubbornly refusing to apply the donations of their German relatives to the proper use, Rev. Risser wrote an elaborate defense: the church could not be built in 1834 because some of the members had moved away (a reference to Roth and an attempt to lay the blame on him); he had written to his German relatives and they had advised him to contribute the money to foreign missions; a number of circumstances had caused delay, and finally he had entirely forgotten about the money. His defense ends in a tide of self-pity and self-justification. Now, he says (1850), he has laid down his pastorate and is considering whether it may not be better to unite with the Reformed or the Lutheran Church.

APPENDIX J

Risser's critique of the American Mennonite congregations is naturally biased by his experiences with the local [Old] Mennonites and colored by his strong prejudices and his intimate knowledge of and association with members of other denominational groups. On the other hand, they may be all the more interesting for that reason.

Young people of Mennonite parentage, he says, are left to form their own opinions regarding church matters, that is, they receive no catechetical instruction during the formative years. Those who wish to unite with the church are given no orderly instruction, that is, no catechism. Young people seldom receive baptism while they are single.

It should be the first duty of a visiting Mennonite minister, he insists, to introduce the practice of giving candidates for baptism catechetical instruction. No Mennonite minister has had special schooling. All Mennonites are farmers and artisans. There are no Mennonite churches in towns or cities. There are conferences but no orderly or formal discussion. no resolutions. No records are kept of decisions reached, nor of congregations, membership lists or preachers. During the last two or three years conferences have been held where resolutions are discussd and decisions recorded. (He probably refers to the newly organized General Conference). A visiting minister should travel from State to State by train but should have his own horse to visit churches and ministers.

Then he continues to point out reasons why Mennonite congregations do not grow. If a Mennonite marries some one who received infant baptism, he cannot go to communion unless the other is rebaptized. To go to communion a new member baptized in infancy must be rebaptized. (Risser through his association with the Reformed and Lutheran church practices had evolved a defense for infant baptism if administered under what he called "the proper conditions.") He condemns Mennonites for "ihre Trägheit in allen geistlichen Dingen, ihr Nichtslernenwollen, ihr Nichtswissen, und ihr Nichtsthun für ihren Gottesdienst" (their laxity in all spiritual matters, their wishing to learn nothing, their knowing nothing, and their doing nothing for their worship service). In spite of all this they still take the attitude, we are the only ones who still have everything as the apostles had it. Other churches, he insists, do not exercise less discipline than the Mennonites. What keeps the latter from growing is their very impoverished worship service ("ärmlichen Gottesdienst") and the very slight increase of their membership.

APPENDIX K

The writer is indebted to the Reverend Carl Heinrich Anton van der Smissen for valuable assistance in collecting material for the later history of the Salem Mennonite Church. It must be remembered, however, that 1874, the date of his call to the pastorate was seventy-one years ago. And even though Rev. van der Smissen was twenty-three years old at that time, many of the events of that period made too little impression on an active young man's mind to be recalled clearly and accurately after the lapse of nearly three-quarters of a century. During the first three years of his pastorate he resided with his father's family at Wadsworth and did not have an opportunity to form an intimate acquaintance with his people. Then, too, he divided his interests between the small struggling congregation at Cleveland and the Salem church. Furthermore, he was from

North Germany, while the members of his congregation came from the Bavarian Palatinate. Naturally, during the brief period of his labors among them, he did not acquire sufficiently intimate knowledge of the family background of his parishioners to make a lasting impression on his mind.

Rev. van der Smissen, now ninety-four years old, is living at the Bethel Home for the Aged at Newton, Kansas. He has a vigorous, active mind and a good memory.

APPENDIX L

Extensive inquiry has failed to discover any of the descendants of Rev. John Risser in and around Ashland, Ohio. Even the third generation descendants of Jacob Risser, brother of Rev. Risser, know nothing of their cousins. Rev. Risser died August 9, 1867, aged 80-1-0. A slender square marble shaft about six feet high, bearing the inscriptions "Our Father" and "Rev. John Risser," marks his grave in the Strickland Cemetery, that one of the "Twin cemeteries" which lies southeast of the intersection. Here lie also the following: "Our mother," "C(atharine) Risser," wife of Rev. John Risser, d. October 24, 1852, aged 62; "Our brother," "J(acob) Risser," d. June 9, 1846, aged 27 (the husband of Elizabeth Leisy); "Our brother," "A(braham) Risser," d. September 15, 1846, aged 25-9-8; and "Our sister," "Mary Risser," died June 19, 1866, aged 34-11-13.

Rev. John Risser's will dated September 26, 1866, witnessed by Catharine Rees and Michael Vesper, and probated September 14, 1867, mentions six heirs each of whom was to receive one-sixth of the estate, "my son John's wife, nee Rathsel," "my son Peter's wife Mary, nee Grenscher" (Granger?), my son-in-law Christian Risser" (husband of the deceased Charlotte?) "my son, Daniel," "my daughter Elizabeth" and "my son, David." It appears from this will that of his nine children only Daniel, Elizabeth, and David survived him. A certain John Risser, however, was to be executor. This might have been his son John or his nephew known as John Risser, senior, because the latter had a son John who is still living in Hayesville. The will specified that David, the youngest son, was to have the farm. He had purchased it for $3500.00 and had paid $100.00 down. On March 14, 1868, David Risser and his wife, Belle L., sold to John and Jacob Herschler for $8000.00 the eighty acres which Rev. John Risser had purchased in 1833 and an additional twenty-six acres. The deed expressly reserved one-half acre near the south end of the farm for a parsonage. This was the parsonage which Rev. John Risser apparently had built as a residence for the "Evangelical" minister. It is possible, to be sure, that he had sold it to the "Evangelicals" for this purpose.

APPENDIX M

According to tradition, the Lutherans organized a congregation at Mifflin about 1835, building a round-log church. The pastor, a Reverend Rauhauser, lived on the fourth lot from the center of Mifflin. They began having English preaching services at least as early as 1843. This may account in part for Rev. John Risser's greater friendliness toward the German Reformed ministers in Wooster. The Trinity Lutheran Church in Ashland was an English congregation. The German Lutheran congregation in Ashland, "The Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church," was not organized until 1865 at or near the close of the Civil War when a few members

adopted a constitution under the name "Evangelische Lutherische Friedens Gemeinde." The congregation was a member of the Joint Synod of Ohio for forty years and is now associated with the organization known as the American Lutheran Church. A Sunday school was organized on March 10, 1868. All services were German until 1895 when the introduction of some English into the Sunday school caused much difficulty. Some German was still in use as late as 1918. (The writer is indebted to Mr. W. A. Duff, of Ashland, for the history of the Peace Lutheran Church.)

THE ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION AND PRACTICES OF THE OLD ORDER AMISH OF LANCASTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

By Jane C. Getz

Introduction

The Problem

It has become almost a truism that one of the wealthiest agricultural counties in United States is Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and that this superiority is largely a result of the farming practices of the Pennsylvania Germans in this area. Moreover, certain groups of these Pennsylvania Germans are noteworthy for the strong cohesiveness of their community groups. Among these the Old Order Amish are particularly known for their continued repulsion of trends which characterize other rural groups—movements to cities, consolidated schools and higher education, commercial amusements, and other conveniences which link rural and urban groups in a common society regardless of the type of economic enterprise. This study is an attempt to describe accurately the present day modes and folkways—religious, economic, and social—of the group selected for study and to note the underlying cultural relationships and forces which explain the current practices.

Importance of the Study

When the project was started, field studies had not been focused upon this problem. The secondary source material regarding the Pennsylvania German groups in this area pictured the queer ways of these people with emphasis on the unique language, folklore, manner of dress and their success as farmers; the descriptions were primarily for popular reading and largely ignored the economic and social forces explaining the customs.[1] Writers on

*This article is Chapter III of a 1945 M.A. thesis written at the American University under Prof. Ernst Correll, entitled *Religious Forces in the Economic and Social Life of the Old Order Amish in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.* A part of the introduction is printed as a preface to indicate the point of view and method of the author. The remaining chapters are headed as follows: I. Introduction, II. Religious Principles and Practices, IV. Group Life, V. Summary and Conclusions. [Editor]

[1] Hal Borland, "Amishmen," *New York Times Magazine Section,* February 25, 1940; Bernice Steinfeldt, *The Amish of Lancaster County* (Lancaster, 1937); Elmer C. Stauffer, "In the Pennsylvania Dutch Country," *The National Geographic Magazine,* 80:37-74, (July, 1941); Franklin Ellis and Samuel Evans, *History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1883); Edwin M. Fogel, *Beliefs and Superstitions of the Pennsylvania Germans* (Philadelphia, 1915); G. P. Musselman, "Hook-and-Eye and Shoo-Fly Pie; The Amish," *Saturday Evening Post,* 212:12ff., Mar. 30, 1940.

the farming practices in Southeastern Pennsylvania ignored the cultural influences on the agricultural economy.[2] Although several writers have treated the economic practices of Mennonites,[3] this particular group was not studied. Therefore, the present study was intended to be the first analysis of Old Order Amish customs with a view to determining whether the successful agricultural adjustments were intrinsically related to the particular type of religion and social organization characterizing the group.

Source Materials and Methods

In April, 1940, a term paper entitled "A Study of the Cultural Adjustments of the Amish and Mennonites in Southeastern Pennsylvania" was submitted by me to Dr. Carl C. Taylor, in connection with a course in Rural Sociology which he was teaching at The American University. That paper was based on a review of all the available source material and concluded that the hypotheses presented there needed further first-hand investigation. At that time a comprehensive survey of community stability was being planned under the direction of Dr. Taylor, Head of the Division of Farm Population and Rural Welfare, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture. In this study six widely varying types of rural communities were studied by participant observers. The communities were selected to range on a continuum from instability to stability of community organization. The Old Order Amish of Lancaster County were selected as representing a strongly integrated type of stable community life.

As a part-time research assistant in the Division of Farm Population and Rural Welfare, I assisted in planning certain of the schedules and reviewing source material (particularly on the factors of leadership in rural areas) for the guidance of all six participant observers. Moreover my earlier research on background material and hypotheses for further study in connection

[2] Lyman Carrier, *The Beginnings of Agriculture in America,* (N. Y., 1923); Mordecai Ezekiel, "Factors Affecting Farmers' Earnings in Southeastern Pennsylvania," *United States Department of Agriculture Bulletin* 1400, April, 1926; Levi B. Huber, "Two Hundred Years of Farming in Lancaster County," *Papers and Addresses of the Lancaster County Historical Society,* 1931; Henry F. James, *The Agricultural Industry of Southeastern Pennsylvania,* (Philadelphia, 1928), George Fiske Johnson, *Agriculture in Pennsylvania: A Study of Trends in County and State since* 1840 (Harrisburg, 1929), Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture; Frederick K. Miller, "The Farmer at Work in Colonial Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania History,* 3:115-20 (April, 1936).

[3] Ernst Correll, *Das Schweizerische Taeufer-Mennonitentum, Ein Sociologischer Bericht,* [Tübingen 1925); J. Winfield Fretz, "Mutual Aid Among the Mennonites," *Mennonite Quarterly Review,* 13:28-48 and 187-209 (January and July, 1939).

with the Amish and Mennonites in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, were made available to Dr. Walter M. Kollmorgen, a social geographer who became the participant observer for the Lancaster County group.

Dr. Kollmorgen spent approximately four months in 1940 in Lancaster County among these groups. The interviews with selected informants were recorded by him at the time, and copies of those reports were made available for use in connection with this thesis. The United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, issued Dr. Kollmorgen's survey entitled *Culture of a Contemporary Rural Community: The Old Order Amish of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania* as *Rural Life Studies*: 4, September, 1942. Since the same hypotheses were in both our minds and the same interview material was used by each it seemed possible that this study and Dr. Kollmorgen's publication would reach the same conclusion. On the other hand, since his work was to be part of a series and the same directives of study were to be used in studying all six communities, his approach was necessarily limited to the pattern of the total survey of stability and instability of selected rural communities.

In view of the great similarity between his approach and mine, I have not read his document and have completely restricted my use of his material to the original interview reports and to certain census data which was compiled while I was working in the Division of Farm Population and Rural Welfare.

My study represents, then, an analysis of material available in printed form and uses the original interview reports prepared by Dr. Kollmorgen. In addition, other published and unpublished data were made available to me by Dr. Ernst Correll, Professor of Economic History in The American University, who is closely associated with European and American research activities in Anabaptist and Mennonite topics.

Obviously severe limitations are imposed by this type of source material. As pointed out above, the printed material is not well authenticated and does not bear directly on the problem. It is also to be noted that the interview reports are secondary source material for me in that Dr. Kollmorgen was the observer. Although every attempt has been made to utilize the actual facts and opinions as reported by the latter and to eliminate the connotations supplied by him, the personal bias of the interviewer cannot be completely eradicated in working from his reports of interviews and observations. Thirdly, Dr. Kollmorgen's approach was governed by the

total study of which his survey was a part. Although that general approach closely approximated the hypotheses which I wished to explore, certain relevant factors from my viewpoint were necessarily omitted; for example, on crucial points such as the attitudes toward automobile ownership or the consolidated school controversy, for my purposes reports on the attitudes of more Old Order Amish informants and particularly interviews with the local school teachers would have been valuable; less emphasis could have been given the specific agricultural practices. Finally, the prohibitions of the group's religious attitude strictly limit the character of information which would be given to any outsider. Although Dr. Kollmorgen has apparently been very successful in establishing friendly relations with sect members, it was constantly evidenced and verbally explained that although agricultural practices or obvious customs could be discussed, church matters were not to be explained to outsiders.[4] For the same reason, no interviews with children would be permitted. Thus it was not possible to determine their attitudes as different from the attitudes attributed to them in terms of the parents.

In addition to these limitations of first-hand investigation, additional factors limit the available source material. Because these groups were rigorously persecuted during their early (European) history with the intellectual leaders as the first victims; because as a series of small independently organized, self-governing congregations they preserved few if any general records; because they refused to participate in public civil affairs and settled grievances out-

[4] Kollmorgen (ms, HA7, p. 5, 6.) In view of the reluctance to explain their customs and beliefs to outsiders, the informants have been classified according to the church group in which they are members and numbered in sequence by groups. The groups and abbreviations which are used throughout are: House Amish—HA; Church Amish—CA; Amish unidentified as to Church or House Amish—A; liberal Mennonite—LM; and conservative Mennonite, Martinite—CM. Thus the reference: "Kollmorgen *ms*, HA 7-p. 5, 6" is to the House Amish informant who has arbitrarily been assigned the number 7, on pages 5 and 6 of the interview reports. The non-sect members who were informants have been classified with the designation "O" and numbered in the same manner. These informants are identified as follows: O-1, Lutheran farmer in New Holland, Pa.: O-2, Lancaster County Superintendent of Schools; O-3, Lancaster County Agricultural Agent; O-4, Director, Lancaster County Soil Conservation District; O-5, Staff member, Soil Survey Division, Bureau of Plant Industry, U.S.D.A., Washington, D.C.; O-6, Director of Lancaster Production Credit Association; O-7, Assistant Co. Supervisor, Lancaster County, Dept. of Public Assistance; O-8, Lancaster County Representative, Agricultural Conservation Program; O-9, Assistant County Agent, Berks County, Pa.; O-10, County Agricultural Agent, St. Marys County, Md.; O-12, Store and gas pump Operator, Intercourse, Pa.; O-13, clerk in Lancaster bookstore; O-14, Lancaster County Home Demonstration Agent.

Note:—Footnote references to the interviews support all references to expression of attitudes and statements of informants. Where the type of farm, size of family, etc., is referred to, the identification of the informant is included in the text primarily for my information.

side of court; and because most recording they considered worldly so that they often refused to have even burial stones—primary sources are extremely limited. Family genealogies, land records, immigration lists, and letters are now being studied intensively by others, but studies are few in number and do not present complete records of contemporary events. A further limitation results from the fact that numerous schisms and the intensely local character of the group life make broad generalizations impossible. H. F. Raup supports the idea that within each sect the economic activities and restrictions, social institutions, standards of living, and degree of maintenance of the old ways vary.[5]

Several different approaches could have been used to explore the problem. First, the knowledge that the culture was relatively stable suggested that the focal point for analysis would be the changes which have been and are being adopted in one specific group. By noting on what points and in what ways they have adjusted to pressures in changing the long accustomed ways, it would be possible to determine the underlying forces explaining the culture of the group. Secondly, a comparative study of the differences between various groups would have indicated the significant elements for the culture of any one group. For example the differences between a conservative Amish group, a liberal Mennonite group, and an outside community, in survival of the group, relative agricultural wealth, rate of accepting change from the old ways, the character of the group life today, could reveal significant social factors. A basic hypothesis was that the rural life was the integrating stabilizing factor so that a third approach could have been to study the adjustments of members who obtain employment in an urban area. Both at the casual breakdown stage and in terms of the longer periods of inner conflicts as contrasted with apparent adaptations, the experiences of workers indoctrinated with an Amish background who are facing the problems of adjustments to city life could high-light the most important aspects of the Amish culture. These approaches would have pointed out, more directly, which cultural adaptions are essential to the group's life and whether the sect can continue to survive if the isolation cannot be so strictly maintained. Such methods would have contributed to the specific knowledge of issues in the attempt of adapting a traditionally rural culture to urban influences.

[5] H. F. Raup has studied in detail a Pennsylvania German community in Northampton County (north of Lancaster County) but some of his observations are relevant for Lancaster County also. See H. F. Raup, "The Pennsylvania-Dutch of Northampton County: Settlement Forms and Culture Patterns," *The Bulletin of the Geographical Society of Philadelphia,* Vol. 36, Winter, 1938-1939.

However in view of the limitations of both the source material and the subject matter, the present study has been limited to an analysis of the cultural adjustments in the total group life on the basis of available data.

Any one of the above approaches could still be used to further substantiate the conclusions of this study but the primary aim, at present, is to view the interrelationships of the religious, economic, and social spheres of the Old Order Amish culture in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. In other words, an attempt is made to apply sociological principles for an understanding of the described customs of this sect.

Economic Organization and Practices.

Farming is the Accepted Occupation.

When asked if any of his people became professional men, Dave Stoltzfus, an Amishman, shook his head and said, "We're farmers. We work on the land. It's an old way of life. A good way."[1] He might have added, as have others, "a godlike way of life."

In understanding these people it is essential to remember that they are farmers partly because of their heritage; the rural way of life is the only environment with which they are fully acquainted. But other groups who have had a strong rural background have now become urbanized and we must look farther to determine why the Amish have refused to leave their farms as conditions about them have changed.

Reasons. The primary reason that the Plain People have clung steadfastly to agriculture as the only possible type of economic enterprise for them is that their religion so dictates both directly and indirectly. Edmund de S. Brunner has expressed the keynote: "The land which yields him sustenance is holy land and God is the real giver of daily bread. All days can be used in serving God when he lives close to the land and to God. Thus every act is an expression of his religion."[2]

As a direct injunction to practice farming and not other professions Genesis 1:28 is evoked: "And God blessed them and God

[1] Hal Borland, "Amishmen" in *New York Times Magazine Section,* February 25, 1940, 8.

[2] Edmund de S. Brunner, *Cooperation in Coopersburg,* (N. Y., Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada, 1916), 13.

said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." As one Church Amishman expressed it: "The Lord told Adam to replenish the earth and to rule over the animals and the land—you can't do that in cities."[3] But even more effective than specific biblical references to farming as a preferred way of life are the numerous other biblical commands which can be practiced by rural people but can not be literally followed in cities.

As a counterpart both the Bible and modern conditions are cited to prove the wickedness of life in cities: "While the Lord's blessings were given to the people who remained in the country wickedness and ruination befell Sodom: shows, dances, parties, and other temptations ruin even the good people who now live in cities; families are small in cities; in the city you never know where your wife is and city women can't cook; people go hungry in the cities but you will never starve if you work hard in the country."[4]

Having fully assimilated the religious precepts which dictate an agricultural economy these people also explain that farming is the only way of life in terms which would not appear to be expressions of their religion but which harmonize closely with the accepted religious principles. "When the farmer gets along well, everybody does, and when the farmer can't get along no one can."[5] "Everybody lives better in the country and it's the only place for children."[6] "Everybody enjoys working with growing things, or should, and you will never starve if you work hard in the country. There is enough variety to provide an opportunity for everyone in the country; doctors and other businesses are needed but all these people would be better off if they lived in the country."[7] The last quotation is even more significant because the informant has been crippled since childhood and wears an artificial leg—even with these handicaps he believes farming is the only way of life.

An Old Order Mennonite who considered himself quite a literate and able man and has taken a leading part in representing the group believed that he could make more money in some other kind of work but he is still farming because that is the best way of life for a true Christian. He is convinced that the farmer is the foundation of all wealth and good society, that farm people re-

[3] Kollmorgen, *Ms.*, CA2-p2.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.*, HA8-p. 11.
[6] *Ibid.*, HA8-p.13
[7] *Ibid.*, CA2-p.2

plenish the cities and provide the enterprising leaders. Professions do not have preferred rank in his estimation.[8] A Church Amishman described the virtues of rural life: "The farmer does not need to spend years in school, can make a modest start, can earn almost as much as others once he gets well established and in the meantime has had a good family life all the time."[9]

These latter expressions reinforce the biblical and religious precepts and indicate some rationalization of the more basic concepts. Although they are interesting illustrations of their reasoning, without the primary religious base it does not appear that these secondary factors would be sufficient to insure continuation of rural patterns.

The dominance of religion not only prescribes the occupation but it also provides an incentive to work and limits the uses toward which worldly wealth shall be put. Economic success is of value only because it attests to their following the Bible and indicates that God's blessing has been given to them. Since worldly accumulation of wealth can be used only for things which are approved by the Bible, it is not dissipated for autos, house furnishings, clothes, conveniences and other luxuries. As a pilgrim here, worldly belongings are valueless in preparing for the future life. The drive to success and limited uses for wealth are religious factors which strengthen the economic organization by focusing its emphasis on successful farming.

Related work. If, then, farming is the accepted way of life are any of the Horse and Buggy Amish following other pursuits? In a strict sense, no. There are qualifying factors, however, even though relatively unimportant at present. First, any Conservative Amish who entered urban occupations would probably be violating several of the precepts of the group—associating with the "world," violating the unequal yoke, gaining some "higher" education, either living at home "shunned" or worse, moving to a city—and therefore be cut off from the group. Certainly no information regarding such a case would be given to an outsider.

Secondly, any one who becomes dissatisfied with the group life would be more likely to become a member of one of the less conservative groups than to ignore entirely the precepts of his youth. Children or relatives were mentioned as belonging to more liberal church groups, but in no case was this change because of occupation. Horse and Buggy Amish who had entered other occupations are

[8] *Ibid.*, CA1-p. 7, 8
[9] *Ibid.*, CA1-p. 5

thus not called House Amish, so that expulsion of dissenting members preserves the unity of the group.

Thirdly, although not yet threatening the group's position, one House Amish preacher who operates a lime quarry, young people who do carpentering, painting, etc., before beginning to farm, and the pressure on land which is forcing extreme intensification of farming, might be the forerunners of change if strains develop in the culture.

The Amish preacher who operates a lime quarry is retired from farming (about 67 years old) and lives in a separate part of the house on a farm which was formerly his and is now owned and operated by his son. Operating the lime quarry, burning lime, and supplying his customers who live as far away as Maryland, is a full-time job; his father, who also operated the quarry, considered this work purely as a sideline to his farming and could only supply his customers if he happened to have enough on hand to meet the need. This practice would not work today, according to the informant, because increased specialization is now necessary for survival. On the other hand, the informant considers his lime valuable because it is still the home-made variety. "It's just like home-baked bread which sticks to the ribs better"[10] He wholeheartedly disapproves of education beyond grade school, says that he favors self-sufficiency (as opposed to specialization) in farming and home making, and appears to support the other commonly held views. Apparently the trend toward specialization in the lime business does not challenge his satisfaction with the group life—possibly because lime quarrying is essential to farming and allows him to remain on the farm.

Another House Amish informant had liked carpentry work and had done it for some years when he was young. After marriage his father urged him to settle on a farm for the sake of his growing children. The informant pointed out that his three children were now settled, with children of their own, all members of the church, and doing well. His wife added: "Now don't you think it was worth it?"[11] Other Horse and Buggy Amish earn extra cash by sawing wood in winter for 50 cents an hour (HA1-p. 3) and by butchering cattle and making bologna for others. (HA7-p. 4).

Some members of the more liberal sects spoke of relatives who are not farming but following occupations which are closely related and do not necessitate living away from the farm. A Church

[10] *Ibid.*, HA2-p.1
[11] *Ibid.*, HA8-p.13

Amish informant has several green houses and sells seeds and young plants in addition to his farming. One son specializes in raising tomatoes for seed and plants, and has a place where he extracts and cans the juice; a commercial firm buys his whole output. (CA2-p. 10) Two sons of a liberal Mennonite work in feed mills in rural areas and the father approves this form of work so long as it is confined to rural areas. (LM2-p. 1) Other occupations which were mentioned in these liberal groups are trucking, carpentry, woodwork (wagons), leather work (harnesses), manual and warehouse work (tobacco), and house work in Lancaster for girls; however, approval is contingent upon living in the country,[12] living close to the soil,[13] and returning to the farm each evening.[14] This outside work is apparently accepted primarily for young people prior to marriage and settling down.

Size and Value of Farms

Census statistics as published do not supply information on a basis which can be interpreted to throw light upon the size and value of Old Order Amish farms. Therefore, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics compiled certain data from agricultural schedules of the 1930 census for all Old Order Amish farmers in Leacook Township in which the House Amish predominate. Of the three hundred farmers in Leacock Township for whom 1930 agricultural census schedules were available, 168 or 55% were Old Order Amish, 52 Mennonites, 23 Amish Mennonites or Church Amish, 2 Dunkers, and 55 non Plain-People.

The average size farm for 168 Old Order Amishmen in Leacock Township in 1930 was about 48 acres. The average value of these farms was $12,160 or $255.46 per acre of farmland. Farm buildings were reported to average $9,162 in value per farm or 75% of the total value of the farm, and farm dwellings were valued at $3,854 on the average. The average value of farm machinery was $1,136. The only tenure group whose farms diverged greatly from the averages in size and value were those of the croppers; the reasons for this are indicated in the discussion of the common practice of young men cropping prior to establishing themselves on farms.

[12] *Ibid.*, CA2-p.2
[13] *Ibid.*, CA3-p.2
[14] *Ibid.*, HA8-p.3

Intensified Farming[15]

In their agriculture, as in other parts of their group culture, the present patterns are characterized by adherence to the accustomed ways. Therefore, in analyzing their farming techniques it is imperative to note the forces which molded the early adjustments as well as the present day methods. The fact that historical information as well as records of the present time indicate a unified complex of intensified farming techniques both explains present practices and reinforces the evidence that the religion has molded the economy because primarily the religious factors led to the intensification of farming.

Historical base. Dr. Ernst H. Correll's study of the origins and early practices of the Anabaptists presents conclusive evidence that in their early history they developed the techniques of intensified farming—animal husbandry, summer and winter stable feeding, fodder cultivation, use of artificial fertilizer as well as manure, rational and commercial rotation of crops, industrial utilization of by-products, etc.[16]

Moreover, he has explained that the Anabaptists were forced to farm intensively because of their fate as a religious group. As a persecuted group they were often banished to poor land areas, were assessed for special taxes, and often paid higher rents as compensation for being accepted as tenants. However, in addition to causing those hardships, the religion also supplied the forces and conditions which enabled them to survive. The biblical injunctions to industry and thrift and disavowal of leisure and sinful recreational activity, the lack of spending for non-productive goods, the co-operation, mutual aid, close bonds within the group by which the less successful were helped by the more successful (including

[15] The Old Order Amish like other Pennsylvania Germans are outstanding proponents of the family type owner-operated farm. Paul V. Maris, Director, Farm Ownership Divisions, Farm Security Administrations, U.S. Department of Agriculture, describes a family type farm as a unit that can meet the minimum needs of the family (adequate standard of living for the family, farm operating costs, and debt retirement) and be operated primarily by family labor. The type of farming operations rather than the size of the unit and the adequacy of the farm for a family over a period of years rather than for a particular family at a particcular time also are important in Mr. Maris' concept of family type farms. See Charles S. Hoffman and Paul V. Maris, "Family Farms," *Land Policy Review,* 5:25-6 (June, 1942). The following discussion clearly indicates that the Old Order Amish farms could be described under that organization of material but the emphasis has been placed in a different manner to stress certain other aspects of the agricultural practices.

[16] H. H. Maurer, "Review of Correll, *Das Schweizerische Taeufer-Mennonitentum, Ein Sociologischer Bericht," American Journal of Sociology,* 31:679, (March, 1926.) See also Dr. Correll's opening address at the Conference on Mennonite Sociology, Chicago, Illinois, Dec., 1941, entitled "The Sociological and Economic Significance of the Mennonites as a Culture Group in History," published in *Mennonite Quarterly Review* (July, 1942).

credit), and the knowledge of techniques being developed in other Anabaptist settlements which was passed from group to group through visiting, enabled them not only to survive but also to excel in their farming operations. In a larger sense, moreover, the survival in face of persecution vindicated their religion for the Anabaptists.

The exclusion from land ownership and from membership in the village economy also had its compensations, for on the large estates where they would be accepted as tenants in a feudal peasant society they enjoyed the opportunities of varying agricultural operations and to experiment with better farming practices. Thus at a period when the struggle for survival was so severe, the Anabaptists, whose successors (including the Old Order Amish) have consistently resisted new ways, adopted changes and adjustments to a much greater degree than did other groups of that society.

Major Enterprises.[17] Historically and today the major farm enterprises have included raising cattle. Dr. Correll has mentioned the Anabaptist achievements in animal husbandry in Europe. In discussing the methods of Pennsylvania German farmers in the colonial period, Dr. Benjamin Rush, who wrote the classic dissertation on differences between German and other farmers in Pennsylvania, pointed out the careful attention given by Pennsylvania Germans to cattle, well housed and well fed, and fenced fields.[18] Ellis and Evans indicated that by using cows for milk, sheep for fleece and pigs for food they bred to get the best products from each animal.[19] Huber states that since they were too far away to transport milk to the Philadelphia market the Germans started at an early period to fatten cattle which transported themselves to the Philadelphia slaughter houses.[20] Lancaster County still still ranks first in the state in livestock production, but these farmers have now taken up dairying because marketing conditions are favorable.

Thus raising cattle has been an important enterprise for Mennonites in Europe, for Pennsylvania Germans, and although the emphasis is now on dairy rather than beef cattle, Dr. Kollmorgen found it still occupies an important place in the Old Order

[17] The following presentation aims to highlight the general pattern of agriculture and the important facts for this study, but is in no way expected to be a critical evaluation of their agricultural practices.

[18] Albert B. Faust, *The German Element in the United States* (N. Y., 1927), 134 ff.

[19] Franklin Ellis, and Samuel Evans, *History of Lancaster County Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1883) 334.

[20] Levi B. Huber, "Two Hundred Years of Farming in Lancaster County," *Papers and Addresses of the Lancaster County Historical Society,* 1931, p. 108.

Amish economy. Three of the conservative Amish informants (HA1, HA3, and HA7), a Church Amishman (CA1), and 2 liberal Mennonites (LM1, LM2) stress dairying—two selling in the Philadelphia market and two in Lancaster. Their herds varied in size from 12 to 24, and according to Kollmorgen, appeared to be excellent cattle—particularly the herd of Holsteins owned by the Church Amishman who belongs to a dairy herd improvement association and considers herd improvement his main interest. On an adjoining farm, which he owns, one of these House Amish farmers (HA1) carries 30 to 40 steers every winter.

Poultry was not frequently mentioned in earlier periods except for home needs being supplied. At the present time, however, at least two House Amishmen (HA1, HA7) carry several hundred chickens, and mentioned selling eggs. Another Amish (A1, p. 1) informant specializes in poultry on his 20 acre farm, and two liberal Mennonites (LM3-p. 2, LM2-p. 2) also sell poultry products.

A wide variety of crops has always been raised by the Pennsylvania German farmer. Miller mentions wheat, tobacco, rye, oats, barley, peas, buckwheat, corn, beans, hemp, flax, turnips, and potatoes.[21]

Tobacco[22] has played an extremely important role in the past as "a vertitable constant mine of wealth for Lancaster County" because of wise farming practices, although only 3-4% of the land is planted in tobacco each year, (about 2% of the superficial area of the county).[23] It plays an important part in enabling young farmers to amass sufficient wealth to start complete farming operations. However, because of decreased yields, tobacco blight, and lower tobacco prices a farmer can only get 15 or 16 cents per lb. for from 1000-1200 lbs. per acre now, whereas he used to get 20 cents per lb. for 1500-2000 lbs. per acre. Consequently many of these farmers—including the Horse and Buggy Amish—are planting no tobacco now.

[21] Frederick K. Miller, "The Farmer at work in Colonial Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania History,* 3:115 (April, 1936).

[22] Among the Old Order Amish there are no regular prohibitions against raising tobacco. The more liberal Amish and Mennonite groups in Lancaster County and other parts of the U.S. and Canada object to raising tobacco when its use is prohibited. At the spring meeting (March 11-14, 1940) of the Lancaster conference of Mennonites (New Holland and Rohrerstown) the following resolution was adopted: "We, as formerly, vigorously protest against the use and distribution of cigarettes, and earnestly recommend that all would refrain from the use of tobacco in any form. Further, we rejoice to know that this is a growing conviction among our brethren and the production of tobacco is opposed." The biblical reference quoted to support this stand is Isaiah 55:2, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which . . . satisfieth not."

[23] Ellis and Evans, *op. cit.,* 354.

Although the Old Order Amish did not explain why they raise tobacco when they do not approve of its use, it appears that they recognize the high returns from its production, realize others will so profit if they do not, and accept the right of outsiders to smoke if their principles do not so forbid. This latter attitude is commonly accepted; for example, the Amish believe other groups are free to obtain higher education, to become professional people, or to violate biblical precepts; they do not attempt to prescribe rules for outsiders and in turn do not want outsiders to prescribe rules for them.

Potatoes are replacing tobacco as a cash crop and, in some cases, tomatoes are being substituted. However only one farmer—who specializes in tomatoes for juice—has placed a great deal of emphasis on tomatoes, because the crop can be readily ruined by untimely rains or unfavorable weather. At least three of these farmers, including a conservative Amishman, raise potatoes for sale. (LM3-p. 2, HA1, A1).

Barley is becoming more popular for feed; more and more is being raised replacing wheat to some extent (HA3-p. 5; LM2-p. 4;CA3-p. 2; CA4-p. 3). When asked how farmers could afford to raise wheat (or barley) on such high priced land, the reply was that clover must be raised to keep up the land; since wheat does not interfere with clover it provides for an additional crop from the same land. Moreover the straw is needed for bedding, and manure is nearly as valuable as hay. Wheat and corn are raised primarily for feed.

Diversification. As these comments indicate there is a wide variety in major enterprises in the area, and the large majority of the enterprises represent intensive as opposed to extensive farming. When it is remembered that the average farm is 48 acres, it is apparent that each farmer intensifies his operations, for the individual farm as well as the area is characterized by a wide diversification of activity. A conservative Amishman (HA8, p. 1) operates a 69 acre farm where he "raises a bit of everything"—corn, wheat, grasses, and clover, tobacco and potatoes in the usual 4 year rotation; fattens a limited number of cattle, pigs, and sheep; milks 6-8 cows; and keeps a flock of several hundred chickens. Another with 50 acres produces milk for the Philadelphia market; he also stresses tobacco, keeps poultry and sells eggs, grows corn, wheat and clover, hauls manure, and butchers for other farmers. His explanation is that egg and milk prices fluctuate seasonally, tobacco, wheat, and straw vary from year to year, and a farmer should take chances on

all of them to get ahead.[24] A third emphasizes dairying, also keeps several hundred chickens, raises corn, wheat, barley, clover, alfalfa and 8-10 acres of potatoes; on an adjacent place which he owns, he keeps 30-40 steers every winter. Although he likes to diversify he believes that efficiency may be lost by diversifying too much since each crop requires special equipment, methods, and work periods.[25] A fourth conservative Amishman follows the usual 4 year rotation, keeps a large herd of good cows, and a flock of only 100 hens, raises no tobacco and only enough potatoes for home consumption. He thinks a farmer can have his heart with only one thing, so that some specialized activity should be practiced on the farm but not at the expense of the land or family living.[26]

The above examples appear typical and offer strong evidence of diversified farming in the community. On the other hand one Church Amish farmer who operates several greenhouses and whose son specializes in tomatoes favors specialization because land is getting high priced, pests numerous, and not everyone can succeed with the same crops. He referred to a friend who successively tried hogs, potatoes and ducks, all on a large scale, and who now raises and sells more than 20,000 ducks a year and is really making good. This farmer also has a car, trucks, electric lights, typewriter, trailer, rubber-tired tractor and every form of power equipment he can use, believes everyone should travel to know about other people, and does not condemn higher education, so that he has violated many of the precepts of the House Amish. For these reasons his comment does not appear to presage any definite change in the present attitudes of the Old Order Amish.[27]

Soils. Probably the most frequent comment about Pennsylvania German farmers is that they settle on limestone soil in the United States. Brunner, Carrier, Wittke, Faust, James, Wentz, and others point out that the Pennsylvania German farmers have settled on the best soil and that the best soil is the limestone. Some of these authors suggest that the Germans did not look for limestone soil, but rather tended to settle where the timber and vegetation were most luxurious indicating well-watered and good soil. Raup suggests that in Northampton County this was a secondary movement and that the Scotch Irish originally settled in the limestone belt leaving the slate belt for the Germans; nevertheless by

[24] Kollmorgen, *Ms.* HA7-p.1.
[25] *Ibid.*, HA1-p.2,3.
[26] *Ibid.*, HA3-p.2.
[27] *Ibid* CA2-p. 3

1750 the Germans were buying the limestone areas and now are in possession of that area in Northampton County.[28]

Various reasons for settlement on limestone soil have been advanced. Faust, James and Wentz point out that such soil and vegetation resembled most closely the natural features of the homeland.[29] A predisposition to occupy the land which most closely resembles that of the home country is by no means confined to the Germans or to this period; perhaps it was merely good fortune that the Germans were already familiar with the fertile limestone type of soil. A second reason may result from the fact that many of the Germans were redemptioners and too poor to buy land; therefore they settled on the outskirts of the colonies where they could obtain land cheaply, and at this period the fertile Lancaster valleys represented the hinterland.

Characteristic of settlement by any Amish or Mennonite group is a practice which suggests that their choice of land might be based on both of the above factors but that it was a rational choice; i.e., their custom of sending ahead representatives to choose an area for settlement. De Graffenried and Michelle are reported to have visited Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the Carolinas in the first decade of the eighteenth century seeking an area for settlement and finally deciding upon the valley then occupied by the Conestoga Indians, where the Mennonites did later settle. Although evidence does not indicate universal exploration of this type, some investigation of available areas preceded the Russian Mennonite exodus to America, several other German Mennonite emigrations, and the settlement by Amish in Johnson County, Iowa. This has been repeated during the past year in the movement of the Amish to parts of Maryland.[30]

Unquestionably many of these people are now settled on limestone soil and these soils have responded to the intense cultivation better than non-limestone soils might have. On the other hand, the Plain People and the Amish in particular are by no means confined to limestone soils in Pennsylvania, or in other parts of the United States and Canada. Rather, the frequent mention of settlement on limestone soil has tended to over-emphasize the factor. Unfor-

[28] H. F. Raup, "The Pennsylvania-Dutch of Northampton County: Settlement Farms and Culture Patterns," *Bulletin of the Geographical Society of Philadelphia,* V. 36, Winter, 1938-9.

[29] Faust, *op. cit.*, p. 140; Henry F. James, *The Agricultural Industry of Southeastern Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1928) pp. 36-9; Abdel R. Wentz, "Beginning of the German Element in York County, Pennsylvania, *Proceedings and Addresses of the Pennsylvania German Society,* 24:99 (1915).

[30] Ellis and Evans, *op. cit.* p. 327; S. D. Guengerich. "A brief History of the Amish Settlement in Johnson County, Iowa," *Mennonite Quarterly Review,* 3:246 (October, 1929).

tunately comparative data regarding farming of Pennsylvania German or Plain People on non-limestone soils is lacking so that no significant conclusions can be drawn.

Nevertheless many authors and informants have expressed their ideas. Raup has concluded that on limestone soil the Germans had superior production; where the land was not so good they were perhaps no more successful than any other group would have been.[31] The Director of the Soil Conservation Service in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, said that Plain People who have moved into the Southern part of Lancaster County, where the soils slip and mash easily and are much more liable to erode, have not been better soil conservers than the Scotch Irish. He did not supply any information regarding their yields and production compared to non-Plain People farming there.[32] According to a House Amishman it is only within the past few years that members of his sect have moved south of the ridge in the county which divides limestone from non-limestone soils; he believes they succeed in farming there but says their experience is so relatively short it is impossible to tell yet if the farming program will have to be changed to fit the non-limestone soils.[33]

The Old Order Amish recognize that recent migrants to Dover, Delaware, Norfolk, Virginia, and St. Marys County, Maryland, have settled on non-limestone soil. Great interest in the agricultural possibilities in St. Marys County, Maryland, was evidenced by numerous questions about the soil there, the markets, and why the area is so poorly developed. According to a representative of the Soil Survey Division, Bureau of Plant Industry, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., the soils in St. Marys County are inferior to those in Lancaster County in native fertility, ease of maintaining fertility, texture, and structure. The better soils in the County, the sassafras and gravelly sand, are acid, (as are those in Lancaster County) and deficient in organic matter, have received little manure, have been farmed poorly, and are in a run down condition. However they can be built up by rotation, legumes, and manure so that they will yield fairly well, and may even be excellent for truck crops.[34] Since the Amish there will rotate, apply lots of manure, grow legumes, and are tending to specialize in truck crops it might be expected that they

[31] Raup, *op. cit.*, P.H.
[32] Kollmorgen *Ms.*, O4-p. 1.
[33] *Ibid.*, HA8-p. 4.
[34] *Ibid.*, O5.

will be successful there, *i.e.* relatively compared to other farmers there but not necessarily compared to their compatriots in Lancaster County.

Because of familiarity with an Amish group in Ohio, one informant volunteered that the Ohio settlement was on a prairie soil, one of the better soils in Ohio, which had been farmed by tenants for decades who raised corn year after year, rotated little and wasted manure. The land yielded less and less until 15 bushels an acre was a common yield. As soon as they bought the land, the Amish began to build it up by rotation, legumes, and lots of barnyard manure, so that today 80 bushels of corn per acre is the common yield.[35]

About 1915 nearly 100 Amish farmers moved from the western states (Indiana, Ohio, Kansas, and Illinois) to Dover, Deleware, and two or three Lancaster County Amish joined them. Only about 50 of these families are now left and the general agreement in Lancaster County is that failure was due to the attempt to transplant the accustomed farming ways *in toto*. The main difference between the new area and those vacated is said to be the soil types, and a change in farming has been necessary to prevent failure. Some of the Dover farmers are now doing better with dairying, grapes, raising horses, and general farming.[36]

Perhaps the best conclusion might be that on soils which will respond to treatment, including limestone, the Amish achieve a high level of productivity because they farm as well as they know whereas others do not farm as well as they know (rotation, manure, growing feed and fodder, diversification). Dr. Kollmorgen supports this theory. It appears that some recognition must be given to the fact that in the majority of cases they appear to have settled on limestone or other soils which do respond to their intensive farming techniques, but certainly their success as farmers cannot be explained on the basis of being located on limestone land.

Climate and Markets. The favorable resources, climatic conditions, and markets in this region are also important in studying the Old Order Amish economy.

In discussing the agricultural indisturies of southeastern Pennsylvania Henry F. James points out that the wide variety of resources made this region adaptable to the colonist's needs. Stone from the quarries; deer and buffalo to eat; hides for leather; wild fruit, small game, wild fowl to eat; sugar from primeval

[35] *Ibid.*, HA1-p. 5.
[36] *Ibid.*, CA1-p. 6

maples; plentiful supply of wood for fences, houses, sleds, bridges, wagons, and fuel; numerous springs for fresh water; streams to be dammed up for water power; and iron for implements—all these factors aided the new settlers in succeeding.[37]

More permanent favorable influences result from the superior climate in this region; average annual temperature of slightly above 50°; hot humid summers; a long growing season (approaches 170 days per year); fairly abundant and well distributed precipitation: lack of frequent and extensive dry spells; comparative freedom from pests and destructive storms; and fairly mild winters.[38] Moreover, Huber emphasizes that there have been no major agricultural disasters in the region and that only in 1790, 1816, 1825, and 1930 have there been severe droughts.[39] The informants knew of no crop failures because of bad weather conditions.

The area has neither suffered unduly because of blights and pests, nor escaped its share. Even with spraying, tobacco production is decreased because of rust. Farmers are very much worried over the Japanese beetle which has recently come into the County. The expense of controlling pests is given as a major reason for the decrease of farm fruit trees for family use. The fly in wheat is being controlled by planting early. Blights on potatoes are proving expensive to control. Tuberculosis in cattle is considered pretty well under control but Bang's disease threatens a herd now and then. Hog cholera is controlled by vaccination. Even the most conservative farmers appear to be adopting modern methods of combatting and controlling pests and blights.

Experiences of other Mennonite groups have suggested that if unfavorable crop conditions strike an area, members of afflicted groups have been aided by other Mennonite groups either to remain on the land until more normal conditions return or to migrate to new localities. If only a few farms were affected the other members of the community would offer aid. Moreover, the diversified farming programs aid in preventing failure if only one or more farm enterprises are affected by pests, blights, or other unfavorable conditions.

Accessibility to good markets has always characterized the area. In the colonial period the Germans took their products to Philadelphia in the famous Conestoga wagons. The stability and growth of this market area has been continuous since the early

[37] James, *op. cit.*, 39
[38] *Ibid.*, p. 34
[39] Huber, *op. cit.*, 108

colonial period and has undoubtedly aided in the success of the region. Nevertheless, it does not seem that these external factors alone can explain the success of the Pennsylvania German farmers, since all farmers in the area had equal opportunities to profit from these advantages.

Techniques. The variety and type of enterprises on these 30-70 acre farms attests a high degree of intensified farming. What practices have these farmers followed to produce the consistently high yields which have been necessary to finance capitalization of the farms at an average value of more than $12,000? The complex of intensified farming techniques—attention to detail, hand and animal powered implements, maintenance of soil fertility—sums up the Amish farming practices. Is it the peculiar appropriateness and combination of these techniques, with which they were familiar, in relation to the soils and markets in the area, which made for their success?

More specifically these techniques can be described as rotation of crops, growing feed and fodder, extensive use of manure, clover, and artificial fertilizers, improved methods of stock breeding, summer and winter stable feeding, and large barns.

Dr. Correll mentions many of these farming practices in describing the European Mennonite groups: "In their technique of intensified farming, animal husbandry, summer and winter stable feeding, fodder cultivation, use of artificial fertilizer as well as manure, rational and commercial rotation of crops, industrial utilization of by-products, they were early recognized as pioneers of modern efficiency."[40]

Russell Smith explains the early rotation of crops; "The farms are small and well tilled and four fields are used in four year crop rotation: (1) wheat, (2) clover, (3) corn, and (4) tobacco and potatoes. The tobacco, potatoes and wheat are sold; the straw, clover, and corn are fed to the cattle who in turn supply manure to fertilize the land. This system has made the Lancaster County yield of tobacco twice as great per acre as in North Carolina; the land is not eroding because the farmer puts a large amount of vegetable matter into it and because wheat following corn holds the earth against winter rains."[41] Dr. Kollmorgen indicates that this rotation pattern is still common and mentions that alfalfa or some hay crop may replace the clover.

[40] Maurer, *op. cit.*, 679

[41] J. Russell Smith, *North America* (New York, 1925), 189.

Correll, Rush, Ellis and Evans, and other writers mention in particular the extreme trust in manure. It has been said that the Pennsylvania Germans could be called the manure-lovers, and highest in their favor is the barnyard variety. House Amish informants do not believe green manure will ever replace stable manure. Stock is kept to provide manure, even when he has a tractor, by a farmer who keeps ten feeder cattle mainly for this purpose (CA 2, p. 7). An argument against use of the tractor is that horses serve the purpose of providing manure.

In addition to stable manure, green manure is widely used. Clover is part of the usual four year rotation, and its need is even given as the reason for growing wheat. Soy beans are interplanted with corn and plowed under in the spring. Lime has always been applied to the land. In fact, in the colonial period the necessity for lime was met by several farmers going together to quarry and burn lime which is plentiful in this area. Commercial fertilizers are also considered necessary, particularly for tobacco and potatoes.

Notwithstanding the belief that their land is not eroding, Dr. Kollmorgen and the Director of the Soil Conservation Service, Lancaster County, point out that the limestone soils are eroding. Although slopes are gradual and limestone land does not wash as easily as the Micaschist soils in the southern part of the County, sheet erosion is apparent after rains and can be demonstrated with a soil augur. The Plain People, however, think of erosion as gully erosion and believe that the land is not eroding because such gullies are easily and regularly razed by cultivation.[42] The Church Amishman who has a large orchard plants grasses and sweet clover regularly and allows these to rot on the ground and supply humus and fertilizer to the soil to prevent the washing and erosion which he noticed when he kept the ground free of vegetation. Terracing, contour plowing and strip cropping are not commonly practiced, although the poultry farmer with a 20 acre farm on the side of a ridge (non-limestone) plans to strip farm in addition to keeping much of the steep slope in clover and alfalfa and using lots of manure; corn will be planted on the land with less slope. Criticism of a neighbor, who plows the hillside and has deep gullies when he should be "plowing with the hill," as a lazy and poor farmer, represents the belief that strip farming and other such methods should be adopted when necessary but that for themselves such practices aren't necessary because of the gentle slopes and lack of apparent (gully) erosion.[43]

[42] Kollmorgen *Ms.*, O4-p. 1, 2.
[43] *Ibid.*, CA3, 2 A1-p. 2; HA4-p. 3

Barns are large because it is considered essential that all hay, straw, and stock should be under a roof in winter. These barns are the famous so called Swisser or Swiss-bank barns. Built with two stories, the barn has a pitched roof suggestive of the European type and is sufficiently large and well-built that heavy teams can be driven onto the upper story to unload grain. In dimensions it is usually 60-80 feet long, 40 feet wide, and 40-50 feet high. The lower story contains stables, passages opening on the front for the cattle to enter. The front of the upper story is projected 8-10 feet over the lower one to provide shelter for wagons and implements; it contains the hay mows and grain lofts and served as a threshing floor. The driveway to the second story is from the higher land at the back of the barn. Built first of log (50′ by 30′), later they were frequently built of stone at the bottom with the frame higher up painted yellow or red. A modern Swisser barn may include a cellar under the driveway, a corn crib, and a shed attached.[44]

Swiss-bank barns are considered economical since feed and bedding are better preserved when kept dry. One House Amish farmer indicated that a good farmer would not think of bedding his stock with wet straw. When asked why he did not have a bull pen or provide for exercizing his herd of Holstein cows, his reply was that the little pen on the north side of the barn was rarely used in the winter because "there's quite a little bit of draft out there." He pointed out that these farmers take great pains to keep stock comfortable and do not like to see it freeze.[45] In fact, leaving cattle and straw outdoors in the winter is the main criticism of other Amish farmers. A liberal Mennonite visiting friends in Indiana remonstrated when his friend put his cows out for the night in cold weather and "thought about the poor cows all night. Felt sorry for them."

A barn which the House Amish informant considers one of the modern dairy barns in that section had a cement floor throughout, and walls and ceilings were as neat and clean as the house, white-washed and kept free of spiders' webs. The cows were in warm stanchions and have running water in individual cups. Flowers in pots were in barn windows (HA1, p. 2). Other farm buildings include a milkhouse or springhouse built over a spring to preserve

[44] Wittke attributes this type of barn to the barns of Upper Bavaria, and Ellis and Evans suggest it was an adaptation from the hillside patterns of Switzerland or a change of the original type to include improvements seen in Holland and the Palatinate during the migrations. See Carl Wittke, *We Who Built America* (N.Y., 1939) 81; Ellis and Evans, *op. cit.*, 367.

[45] Kollmorgen, *Ms.*, HA3-p. 5, 10

the milk, fruit, and vegetables, an outside bakehouse, a hog-pen, poultry-house, and smoke-house depending upon the degree of prosperity of the owner. Since farm buildings on the average were valued at $3,854, the barn appears to be the most important building on the farm. Dr. Rush said the Pennsylvania Germans built barns for stock before they built houses.[46] Informants said the buildings were worth as much as the land, and barns probably would cost $10,000 to replace.

Two other examples from earlier periods further exemplify the painstaking work expended willingly to achieve better products. Having settled where virgin timber and vegetation was dense, the Pennsylvania Germans manifested their ability to prepare the land for cultivation in a quicker and more complete manner than did the other settlers where the land was even less difficult to clear. In all instances it is reported that the Germans cut down the trees and removed the stumps in clearing their fields whereas the others girdled the trees and allowed them to rot in the ground. In this way the Pennsylvania Germans had their fields in as good condition in two years as the Scotch-Irish had theirs in twenty. This willingness to tackle a hard problem with great industry rather then settling on lands requiring less work in clearing gave the Germans a head start in Pennsylvania.

Dr. Rush mentions their economical use of wood by saving some areas of wooded land, letting saplings grow, leaving a few trees in pasture land to provide shade for cattle, having a stove in the center of the room which burns less wood and provides more heat than fireplaces at the ends of the room. This also lessened requirements for wood and saved use of teams in mid-winter to haul wood. Reference is also made to fencing all fields with a fence of stumps, using those removed from the fields, "Live hedges," and the "worm" fences made of split logs laid in zig-zag fashion—to protect crops from livestock.[47]

Farm Equipment. Because of religious prohibitions, because intensive as opposed to extensive farming has not forced its introduction, and because of the large labor supply available in the family and community, the Old Order Amish have limited the use of mechanized farm equipment. One informant listed the implements on an average farm as 1 or 2 plows, 1 or 2 cultivators, 1 welder, harrow, cultivator, seeder, drill, mower, side delivery rake, hay loader, and one binder for every two farms. A tractor may be

[46] Faust, *op. cit.*, 137
[47] Faust, *op. cit.*, 139.

used on a belt but not for plowing.[48] An Old Order Amish farmer who owned a tractor and used it for threshing expressed the reasons, other than religious, for disapproving of tractors for mobile use: (1) operating and depreciation expenses are heavy whereas horse-feed can be produced on the farm and horses appreciate in value if handled right and fed right (he believes the cost of feeding horses is exaggerated by proponents of the tractor and really amounts to about only $50 per year); (2) older tractors packed the ground although rubber tired ones are better in this respect; (3) tractor plowing is not as good as horse plowing; (4) leisure time gained by using mechanized equipment leads to trouble —the farmer is supposed to stay at home and work. He agrees that a truck might be handy, but says he can always hire a truck or car when it is really necessary.[49]

Another House Amishman has a steam engine and thresher; earns extra money in winter by sawing wood for neighbors (HA1, p. 3). Another (HA3, p. 2) has a milking machine, likes it, and believes it is economical for a large herd (has 24 Holstein cows, 7 children).

In contrast to this the liberal groups have no religious restrictions on the use of mechanized equipment. An auto, truck, tractor, power-house electricity, electric motors for milking and pumping, refrigeration in milk house and in home, electric stove, electric lights, washing machine, electric iron were all possessed and considered essential by a liberal Mennonite. He believed that these conveniences provide more leisure and help to keep children on the farm; he said that with them he can farm with less effort and more thoroughly. It is interesting to note that he keeps two cows to replace the two horses which the tractor replaced and considers their manure better than the horse manure. All the equipment was paid for and he had no difficulty in making minor repairs or getting repair men when necessary. Not worried by the trend to mechanization, this couple believed there is still plenty of work to do—but do not believe in work for work's sake—and do not think the added leisure is spoiling them.[50]

This represents the most extreme liberal view point expressed. Another liberal Mennonite had some of this equipment and expected to get more as soon as he can afford it, for he believed in keeping abreast of the times. Nevertheless he repeatedly attempted

[48] Kollmorgen, *Ms.*, HA6 p. 5
[49] *Ibid.*, HA4-p. 4.
[50] *Ibid.*, LM3-p. 1.

to defend his stand—"A farm might as well have conveniences as city people, why not? The farmer works harder than city people." The constant rationalization might indicate that they still have some misgiving regarding mechanization.[51] A third disapproved of tractors because he has a 40 acre farm and wants to keep his two boys busy. He would like to tax tractors out of existence because they have caused the price of livestock to fall and are making farming too efficient so that young men go to cities and an unemployment problem is caused.[52] A Church Amish farmer favors a tractor in specialized tomato farming on the grounds that it is necessary to get work done fast enough at the proper time, but he uses the saved time for other farm work and does not seem to feel leisure *per se* is gained.

No conclusive evidence can be introduced to show that those favoring all out mechanization are any better or worse off because of the adoption of power equipment. Yet, collectively they appear to be more anxious to keep abreast of the times, to have what city people have, and to make farming as easy as possible. Such trends in thinking are directly opposed to the conservative Amish desire to remain strictly isolated, to eschew as "worldly" what city people have, and to regard leisure as a possible evil rather than as an advantage. Does this indicate a change in the liberal group's fundamental attitudes so that they are now more like other rural groups than like their Old Order Amish neighbors?

Mechanization could be considered as an expression as well as a cause of changed attitudes. At any rate, although they appear to have compromised their stand by accepting tractors for belt power and some other mechanized equipment, the Horse and Buggy Amish at the present time are still favoring intensive cultivation by the farmer and his sons with relatively simple and pre-mechanized tools.

Intensification of farming has proved a useful technique for the survival of the group as well as from purely economic aspects both historically and today. As long as intensification is a basic adaptation, the pressure on land has been relieved from time to time by decreasing the size of the farm units, as well as by acquiring additional land in order to provide enough farms for numerous children. The diversified farming on smaller and smaller units has been increasingly intensified and commercialized to obtain adequate returns. Without question, the complex of intensified farming

[51] *Ibid.*, LM1-p. 3, 4.
[52] *Ibid.*, LM2-p. 3

techniques is important in explaining the success of these Old Order Amish farmers. Intensified farming has served their purpose well partly because it suited the soils and markets in the area. Nevertheless, the intensified farming practices do not appear different enough from the techniques of other farmers to completely explain their satisfactory agricultural economy.

Subsistence Farming and Home Making. Already certain clashes between commercialized intensification and subsistence farming appear to be resolved by sacrificing some of the self-sufficiency of the farm and home. A Liberal Mennonite (L-3, p. 7) posed the problem neatly. He used to raise his own hogs and steers for home use. Since he now produces milk for the Philadelphia market he had to rearrange the barn and found it difficult to keep hogs. He finds it more economical to feed an extra cow than a steer so he now buys hogs and a steer—which he divides with neighbors—for killing.

Early writers frequently mention that the Pennsylvania German farmer gave ample attention to maintaining a subsistence level of agriculture with his crops, his livestock, his vegetable gardens, orchards, etc. A characteristic has been to provide for the family's needs as well as to produce a cash crop. Ellis and Evans refer to the popular comment that German women have had vegetables on their tables in the first season and have planted vegetables gardens with seed brought from home before the men have the roof on the house.[53] Wittke points out that these Germans have always raised much of their simple vegetable diet in the kitchen gardens, concentrating on cabbages and turnips, and that they were probably the first to cultivate asparagus and cauliflower in America.[54] In 1789 Dr. Benjamin Rush devoted at least three of his 16 points to indications of self-sufficiency of German farms: (1) kitchen gardens to supply vegetables in all seasons; (2) orchards; (3) using available wood for fences and heat. There are also references to the women canning, spinning, and sewing.[55]

Dr. Kollmorgen found rather conclusive evidence that the earlier pattern is being changed today. A House Amishman discussed these innovations in detail as follows:

> Farming in this section has always been partly self-sufficient and partly commercial but times are changing so that the farmer has to adopt all sorts of things to keep up. A farmer used to get along by using his own feed for cattle. Hogs followed cattle and consumed waste corn. Now feed dealers

[53] Ellis and Evans, *op. cit.*, 349
[54] Wittke, *op. cit.*, 83
[55] Faust, *op. cit.*, 131

have shown the farmer how to fatten cattle quicker with less cost and have changed farming greatly in the last five years. Feed dealers have been making experiments on best feeds and are getting better and better all the time. All you need to do is to tell the dealer what you want feed for and what grains you want mixed (farmer's own grain usually) and dealer comes, gets grain, usually corn, grinds or chips it, mixes and returns it. All we need to do is shovel it out to the stock.

Dairy cattle also respond to better feeding and although few of us test for production records, we are keeping better cows. Used to be we just gathered what eggs were laid, now the hens lay more eggs with better feed when they are culled.

For fertilizer we can go to a fertilizer man who has been long established in the community and knows what he is doing. When fertilizer is needed, we tell the man what crop and kind of ground it is for and he decides the right kind and brings it to the farm.

My son now likes spraying of potatoes. Most farmers find it convenient and economical to have potatoes sprayed by a professional truck sprayer since the equipment is rather expensive. All we do is tell him when to come and pay him. Trouble is we can't always get him when we need him.

Also more attention is being paid to getting good seed potatoes, preparing bed well, culling, and marketing as to grade.

A lime quarry used to be operated in every neighborhood by some farmer or group of farmers. That was dirty and hard work. So now very little lime is made in the neighborhood. Home made lime can still be gotten for $8 or $8.50 a ton but then you have to haul it with a wagon. A lime dealer will deliver on the field for $10.50 to $11.50 a ton and quality is guaranteed.

It's cheaper and less trouble to buy it from a dealer. It is very troublesome to make lime and our time is worth too much—used to be plenty of time but now a farmer can use his time more profitably than in quarrying lime.

We used to raise practically all the food at home, had plenty of pork, beef, chickens, eggs, canned a great variety of vegetables and fruits, always had plenty of fresh fruit in season. Now farmers buy lots of things such as bananas, oranges, crackers, cookies, breakfast foods, bread and other things. Now bakery bread is getting very common, for bread truck comes to house four times a week, but many housewives still bake pies and cakes at home. We like baker's bread for it always turns out well. (The wife of the son added that most of the things they eat are still home made and she puts up all their meat and lots of vegetables and fruits as well as cooking, sewing clothes for all the family, tending children, and taking care of the garden). Buying is probably going too far but we have to do this to keep up.[56]

Other House Amish pointed out that fruit, bread, pretzels, and breakfast foods are bought more frequently, that they still usually can (cold pack) more than they can consume including fruit, vegetables, and meat, although in this case the beef to kill and can was bought since only dairy cattle are kept on the farm. Preference for home prepared foods was because they are cheaper,

[56] Kollmorgen *Ms.*, HA8 pp. 2, 3, 8-10

cleaner, and taste better. However, almost all older women bake bread at least occasionally. Only one informant, a Liberal Mennonite, mentioned that he exchanges wheat for flour.[57]

Fruit is often purchased from a neighboring orchardist because expensive equipment for special treatment and spraying is considered too expensive for a few fruit trees.[58] A Church Amishman says that particularly people living nearer town find it quicker and more convenient to hire a butcher instead of getting together to butcher, cut meat, and make sausage. Some even have the butcher make sausage, but he does not think it tastes so good as when farmers make it themselves.[59]

A Church Amishman indicated that land is used so intensively there is no room for woodlots except on ridges with rocky soil. Some farmers living near the ridge and with extra help make arrangements with the owner of ridge land to cut wood and sell it on shares but most farmers now burn coal for fuel.

These comments and others from Plain People seem to indicate that the Horse and Buggy Amish still have large gardens, produce most dairy products, can most of their vegetable, fruit, and meat supply; are buying more fruit and fuel than formerly; are purchasing baker's bread quite frequently as well as crackers, breakfast foods and fruits which cannot be grown in that area. Increasingly they are dependent on commercial dealers for feed—although they usually supply the grain—fertilizer, and lime, and for spraying and other expensive treatments to prevent blights, pests, etc.

[To be continued]

[57] *Ibid.*, HA3, p. 7; HA2-p. 4; LM3-p. 7.
[58] *Ibid.*, CA3-p. 3.
[59] *Ibid.*, CA2-p. 8

A MENNONITE CRITIQUE OF THE PACIFIST MOVEMENT

By

Don. E. Smucker

Robert Bridges in his poem, "The Testament of Beauty," bespeaks the solid realism needed in these times:

> If we read but of Europe since the birth of Christ,
> 'tis still incompetent disorder, all a lecture
> of irredeemable shame; the wrongs and sufferings
> alike of kings and clowns are a pitiful tale. . . .
> While loud and louder thro' the dazed head
> of the Sphinx
> The old lion's voice roareth o'er all the land.

All divisions in the peace movement revolve around the cause and cure of this sad state of affairs. I start with the assumption that the peace movement has failed: the outbreak of ruthless total warfare is simple proof of this fact. The National Council for the Prevention of War did not prevent the war: the Fellowship of Reconciliation did not reconcile the opposing powers; The War Resisters' League could not resist the satanic tides of war; the American Friends Service Committee did not make the world friendly; the Mennonite Central Committee did not construct any central cohesion to hold the world together; the Socialist party did not socialize the naked individualism of humanity! Ironically enough, the Nobel Peace Prize, whose source of funds was a high explosive, was once awarded to Nicholas Murray Butler, one of America's leading interventionists. In any case, our failure is clearly set before us in tragic, painful truth.

I repeat that divisions in the peace movement revolve around explanations of our failure to prevent the war and/or to make a lasting peace. After a considerable period of professional service in the American peace movement, I have been forced to restudy the reasons for this perennial failure. Like the Apostle Paul I have had my Damascus Road experience. This brief essay is a report of my new synthesis of thought on great issues of war and peace in the light of what I would like to call "Biblical realism as guided by historic Mennonite thought." My present mood was well stated by Sam Shoemaker when he wrote: *"I am tired of cures that don't cure, movements that don't move, of answers that don't*

answer." (And I think that deep down this is a well nigh universal feeling! It is vague and confused, in the main; yet the clear thought is there that the present answers of the peace movement do not answer. This, to be sure, is not complemented by any clarified declaration of what the *true* answer really is.) With this background, I would like to present four basic criticisms of the modern peace movement in the light of my re-study of the Bible and Mennonite history. I submit them not as the parochial suggestions of a cult or sect; rather, as universal truth as God has revealed it to me. If that is dogmatism, then make the most of it!

First *is the nature and the meaning of peace: peace is the fruit of the Christian Gospel; peace is the fruit of regenerated individual lives saturated in prayer. While it includes social and political reconstruction, these collectivist improvements also root in the radical change necessary in the human heart. Thus, the primary task of the peacemaker is to bring individuals into direct contact with Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.*

Lest the more secular reader dismiss this as impossible Christian orthodoxy, let me indicate the extent to which this belief is held by some of the most brilliant intellectuals of the peace movement. Here, for example, is John Middleton Murry writing the *Peace News,*[1] the outstanding journal of pacifism in Great Britain. Murry asks: "If man really wants peace, what has prevented him from keeping it? Pacifists are prone to invent all kinds of excuses for him. The good and peaceful natural man is bedeviled by capitalism, or vested interests, or armament firms. That is bunk. Man is cheated of peace by Man. The same individual who at one moment thinks he wants peace more than anything else, at another moment wants all kinds of things that cannot be had by peace." Murry, incidentally, stands squarely on the grounds of Christian truth and is a member of the church of England.

Or, again I believe that this passage from the writings of J. S. Whale, the famous English theologian, puts the case very succinctly (a passage, by the way, quoted by Kirby Page in his *Religious Resources*):

> The world is wrong not because it has not yet discovered a new social technique, but because individual hearts are wrong. Sin would still be our stark intractable problem even if we awoke to find ourselves in Utopia tomorrow morning. 'You cannot build the Golden Age out of leaden men'. Problems innumerable wait for their solution at the hands of statesmen, scientists, economists and teachers; but there is not a social problem under heaven which can advance toward real solution unless the great problem of which it is an aspect is first met and dealt with in the secret places of the individual heart. It is there that the solution must

be found if it is to be found at all. Only redemption and conversion can meet our case. . . . . The causes of folly and woe do not lie exclusively in vast intangibilities such as the Economic system or the National system, but in *me and others everywhere like me who make the systems what they are. I find that my failure, my creed, my fear, match yours, and that our lives interlock to form an organized system of evil.*

If this is not enough, I turn to the most scintillating man of modern letters who has been converted to pacifism. I refer to Aldous Huxley. While I do not endorse every aspect of his position, yet I think it is most significant that the bearer of the great name of Huxley, a symbol of scientific rigor, writes as he now does, that the most brilliantly cynical writer of the modern novel is now producing books dealing with eternal verities; that this encyclopedic mind has ranged over the whole cultural heritage of humanity and has reached a radically religious basis for his pacifism: here are his words from *Grey Eminence,* a study of what happens when the "good" man goes into politics:

> It is a matter of experience and observation that actions undertaken by ordinary unregenerate people, sunk in their selfhood and without spiritual insight, seldom do much good . . . Those who rush headlong into good works without having acquired through contemplation the power to act well—what do they accomplish? (Little more than nothing, and sometimes nothing at all, and sometimes even harm.) What can the politicians do for their fellows by actions in the political field and without the assistance of contemplatives? Not very much. The only one effective method is that of the mystics.

Thus Huxley throws out one of the biggest dogmas of the modern peace movement: the A-No. 1 priority of action, action, action, without reference to spiritual preparation. This would suggest that action is added to prayer; rather than occasional prayer being added to the primary fact of action.

Perhaps the key passage of Scripture in connection with this viewpoint is James 4:1-3. Devere Allen points out in his *Fight for Peace* that in the history of the Christian peace movement this text has been used more than any other. "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. . . . Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." Which is to say that strife and warfare arise from evil desire in the human heart. All this stems directly from the Sermon on the Mount where all outer behaviour

is traced to the inner attitude. ". . . an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil." (Luke 6:45.)

Immediately there comes a logical deduction from all this in terms of the post-war settlement: anyone who hopes to impose a just and durable peace on unregenerate humanity is doomed to a so-called peace which is unjust, undurable and unbearable. This is one of those answers which do not answer, movements which do not move and cures which do not cure. Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand—this is the price of peace. Until the peace movement comes to this completely religious center of emphasis it will continue to vacillate between dire predictions of doom on the one hand, and what Phil Jacobs calls, "bargain counter peacemaking" on the other.

This leads quite naturally to the second Mennonite critique of the modern pacifist movement: *It is too optimistic about the possibility of genuine world peace.* I have waded through Pitirim Sorokin's *Social and Cultural Dynamics,* a study of 967 wars in 2150 years; Alfred Vagt's *History of Militarism;* Stanton Coblentz's monumental *Marching Men* and Quincy Wright's 1500 page magnum opus, *A Study of War.* These are far-reaching attempts to discover the role of war in human history, past, present future. From these studies I have digested the following eight facts!

1. War is one of the most constant and distinctive features of human history. (It is not the *only* factor in history—thank God!—but is clearly constant and definite in outline.)
2. War is not disappearing from history.
3. The Twentieth Century is the bloodiest of all recorded time.
4. The violence of the Twentieth Century is all-pervasive, reaching peaks in revolution, suicide, crime, punishment as well as war.
5. There are no consistently peaceful or consistently militaristic countries.
6. There has been a revolution in military science, bringing a Society-in-Arms for the first time in all history.
7. Total war has brought the most terrible barbarism in all history, wiping out the distinction between combatant and non-combatant.
8. *In every epoch there has been a small band of absolute pacifists keeping alive the more excellent way of love. Yet this totally committed group has always remained a tiny minority.*

Is all this just bad luck? Or, is there a "cosmic drag" on human affairs? The Mennonites and all other Biblicist groups place these facts in the context of the Kingdom of God. The small band of Christian non-resistants constitutes the Kingdom here-and-now. This group can expand; this group can be the leaven for

the lump. But the fundamental gap between the true followers of Christ and the followers of Caesar, this remains until the Last Judgment. In this sense, Biblicism is pessimistic though it is a pessimism confirmed by history! Ultimately, however, it is optimistic since it believes that God's purposes are completely realized. This is the New Heaven and the New Earth concerning the details of which Christians disagree. But it comes as a gift from God and is not built by human hands. Hence the Kingdom is both here and coming; both present and future. Without this distinction, all analysis of human progress is fraught with ghastly illusion. The choice seems to be perennial disillusionment or this paradoxical view of the Kingdom.

The third criticism of modern pacifism is its radical compromise with coercion. Its love is not far-reaching enough. This is the question of whether the basic conviction is non-resistance or non-violent resistance. The Sermon on the Mount speaks of turning the other cheek, going the second mile, loving your enemies. The meek are blessed because they shall inherit the earth. Paul's radiant Charity chapter speaks of love which "seeketh not her own," that is, a love which is not self-consciously used as a technique to get something. Hence the New Testament way is love or nonresistance. Here comes a tremendous correction to the peace movement. Guy F. Hershberger, a leading Mennonite scholar, declares: "But the New Testament way is to aim at love, not justice. In aiming at justice the result is frequently a selfish struggle for power, position or wealth. In aiming at love, however, the result is often justice as well as love. But, if not, the Christian must continue to love anyhow, for according to the teaching of Christ, His disciples ought to suffer even injustice rather than forsake the way of love." The failure to nail down this point has cost the pacifist movement many casualties as the impatient compromise their pacifism for the supposedly immediate gain of justice-through-violence; or when those pacifists who take justice as the No. 1 concern are thus betrayed into violence. Needless to say, this is not a rejection of justice. Indeed, it is the only route to justice: through suffering love uncompromisingly applied.

No one has confused this issue more than Mahatma Gandhi, perhaps the greatest living embodiment of liberal pacifist philosophy. As I write this I have before me the Oct. 2, 1944 issue of *The Progressive* with a moving article by John Haynes Holmes, "Gandhi at 75." There Dr. Holmes admits that "To Britain, in turn, he has offered to suspend civil disobedience *and concede full*

support of the war against Japan, and to leave all military control and direction in English hands." In other words, in the name of justice for India, Gandhi compromises his principle of non-violence by offering to support the war *IF* the demands to free India are met. It is one of the ironies of history that the greatest hero of modern activist pacifism has given partial or total support to three wars (the Kaffir and Boer wars in Africa and World War I) and conditional support to World War II.

What is more important, Shridharani, perhaps the best known interpreter of Gandhi to the general public as well as the peace movement, has shocked many pacifists with his cold realism concerning the secularism and the coercion in the Nationalist movement. His famous book about Gandhi's movement is titled: *War Without Violence.* Whatever else it may be, bloodless war is definitely *not* to be equated with the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount. (Shridharani makes this point explicit in *My India, My America.*) A striking attack on the coercionist tactics of American non-violent direct action experimentation was made by A. J. R. Schumaker in *Fellowship* for September, 1944. Growing numbers of sensitive pacifists are seeing that modern pacifism is almost blindly committed to an attempt to *force* righteousness on the world. This compromise of pure love also leads to a new violence in many cases. Jim Farmer published a survey of reactions to a proposal for American Negroes to start mass civil disobedience. Replied a Southern Negro, famous for his fearless challenge of injustice: "There's no question in my mind that violence would follow on a huge scale, and that the movement would defeat itself because it would antagonize the masses of the whites. In a word, your non-violence would bring violence. Are you ready for that? The Bilbo's would use your program to consolidate reaction. In India Gandhi is jailed: in Georgia he'd be lynched."

This same critique of coercion (bloodless or bloody) suggests questions concerning the class warfare of America uncritically sanctioned by pacifists who are pro-labor. Unless one has grown up on economic fairy tales, it is utterly impossible to deny the reality of class warfare of which organized labor is one party and organized capital the other. To labor, the chief weapon is the strike which, in stopping goods and services, can destroy property as well as maim and kill human beings. The LaFollette committee has outlined the bloody weapons of the anti-labor people. But to assume that labor's coercion and violence are exempt from pacifist criticism is one of the most unwarranted assumptions of the modern peace movement.

Hence many Mennonites are conscientious objectors to organized labor as a realistic weapon of power in class warfare. (Based on I Cor. 6 the same line of thought rejects all legal action as a form of coercion.)

The final criticism of the modern peace movement is its radical misunderstanding of the political order of the State. No dogma goes deeper among our liberals and leftists than the necessity of using the government for the Christianization (or socialization, if you prefer!) of the social order. Hence one can participate in its coercive power, stopping short of external aggression in the form of international or civil warfare.

No! says Biblical realism, backed up by all other realistic students of the State. The basic function of the political order is to maintain order among sinners through the use of coercion. (There are, to be sure, many, many additional functions which the modern welfare state has added: but this is the unique one without which it would not be a political order.) This order is ultimately maintained through police, jails, courts, G-Men, militia and armies. All are contrary to strict New Testament standards though the Bible sets aside all anarchism by sanctioning government for those who do not live on New Testament standards. This is the example, par excellence, of the necessary evil!

Using Kant's categorical imperative the Christian non-resistant raises virtually unanswerable questions about political participation: Could you be the President of the United States *and* Commander-in-Chief of the army and navy? Could you pay the price which Jeanette Rankin and all Congressional "pacifists" have paid, namely, support of measures for national defense by armed force? Could *you* be Governor, say of Ohio *and* head of the state militia? Could *you* be mayor of a municipality *and* head of the police department? If you answer no—and what other answer could a pacifist give!—then, there are serious questions to be raised over voting and agitating and propagandizing for political office. During the Keep-America-Out-of-War campaign most pacifists implicitly at least accepted the isolationist starting point that it was all right to have an army and navy just as long as we solved our domestic problems, thereby keeping it "at home." Precisely this kind of fuzzy thinking must be ruled out if pacifists are to be consistent and honest. If we are going to reject armies and navies, then we have no right to become military strategists for those who do accept them. If we can't accept political office as President dare we cast a vote for a man with whom we are in radical disagree-

ment on this point. *Incidentally, Quakers, Mennonites, and Dunkards in responsible politics have generally dropped conscientious objection to war.*

Are we to do nothing? No, a thousand times no. The political order will remain on the periphery of our lives, though it will be dealt with frequently. The main focus must be upon non-coercive deeds of faith and works: missionary work, opposition to racial intolerance, regard for other minorities, interest in religious liberty, living a life of simplicity, creating healthy small communities, relief and social reconstruction. All these, in the context of pacifist ethics, under the banner of Christian truth. Do all this and let God bring in the Kingdom in His own good time. "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son" (Gal. 4:4).